

Menahem Ben-Sasson

Time and Revelation in the Vision of Daniel

CHRONOI

Zeit, Zeitempfinden, Zeitordnungen

Time, Time Awareness, Time Management

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Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum, Christoph Marksches and
Hermann Parzinger

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Volume 11

Menahem Ben-Sasson

Time and Revelation in the Vision of Daniel

From the St. Petersburg Collection

Included as an appendix:

Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl in Judeo-Persian

Copied, translated, annotated and introduced
by Dan Shapira

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Preface

The opening up of the Soviet Union in 1989 ushered in a new era of scientific research in Israel, including research in Jewish studies. At that time, I was invited by the Leningrad branch of the Academy of Sciences to examine collections of Hebrew (including Judeo-Arabic) manuscripts in the city's libraries. The assistance that the directors and staff of these collections offered was enormous, professional, and high quality, and the results of that visit continue to nourish the work of many colleagues, mine included.

One of the manuscripts I examined then was of a new, different, and unique 'Vision of Daniel'. I reported it in the initial publication of the St. Petersburg collections and to colleagues who were studying apocalyptic texts, and I studied it with advanced students of the History of the Jewish People department in seminars during the late 1990s, in the hopes that together we would be able to prepare fitting introductory chapters and complete its publication. The research students, each according to their talents, turned to their own studies and to their life trajectories, and publication of the Vision was postponed. Recently, two factors allowed me to return to the study of this work: an invitation from the Chronoi research group in Berlin, and the preparation of a festschrift for Prof. Israel Jacob Yuval. The Vision of Daniel from St. Petersburg returned to the desktop to prepare it for standalone publication. While preparing this work, early editions of the Vision and preliminary discussions of several issues it raises were published. Comments, additions, and corrections to those publications have been incorporated in this edition.

I studied this text during my stay at the Einstein Center Chronoi, Berlin. I would like to thank the members of its executive board, Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum, Christoph Marksches, and Hermann Parzinger, and our very skilled research associates, Irene Sibbing-Plantholt, Eva Rosenstock, Stefanie Rabe, Cinzia Pappi, Yosef Elharar, Franziska Küster, as well as Chronoi's dedicated team for their daily assistance. The contributions of Chronoi's fellows (especially Emmanouela Grypeou and András Kraft) to thinking about time in the context of this work are unique, matched only by their willingness to give generously from much of their own time to clarify many of the subjects discussed below. Israel J. Yuval, Oded Irshai, Meir Bar-Asher, Michael Stone, and David B. Cook read a draft of the text and shared their thoughts with me; the latter's notes are signed [DBC]. I am indebted and want to thank the teams of the Oriental reading room, Olga Vasilievskaya, Mr. Boris Zaykovsky, and the Electronic Document Delivery Service of the NLR, St. Petersburg for their permission to publish the text and their dedicated professional accompaniment of my work. I am grateful to my colleagues in Israel and abroad who devoted time to advise and assist me; they are (in alphabetical order): Profs. Meir Bar-Asher, Sebastian Brock, Lorenzo DiTommaso, Shmuel (Steven) Fassberg, Yair Furstenberg, Matthias Henze,

Oded Irshai, Yifat Monnickendam, Hillel Newman, Yakir Paz, Dan Shapira, Michael Stone, and Israel J. Yuval. The anonymous reviewers of earlier publications of parts of the material are thanked for critically reading the manuscript and suggesting substantial improvements. Special thanks to Jessica Bartz of De Gruyter Brill and Fem Eggers of Datagrafix GSP GmbH for their very professional accompaniment and good advice.

The research was supported by the Israel Science Foundation (grant No. 2087/18). Translations from the Hebrew in this publication are by Elli Fischer; I have incorporated some of his notes on the text, and they are marked [EF]. Translation of numbers follows the originals, which alternate between the use of letters and words to represent numbers.

The text, MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293 (formerly 22), folios 1a–4a is described in the library's catalog as: "Apocryphal prophecies attributed to the prophet Daniel." See also in KTIV, the National Library of Israel, the following: The National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, Russia Ms. EVR I 293; Film no. F 51121 (Reel 23); System no. 990000786990205171–1¹. Thanks to Dr. Edna Engel (NLI) for dating the MS. See also: Abraham Harkavy, *Handwritten Catalog of the First Firkovich Collection*, Steinschneider Collection at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Shelf mark 11000, fol. 83. I am grateful to Prof. Judah Galinsky for troubling himself to locate the catalog and citing its exact entry: "22. Prophecies of Daniel that kabbalists attribute to him. Quarto paper. Bifolio. 3 sheets." Perhaps he added 'that kabbalists attribute to him' to differentiate it from the Masoretic version of Daniel.

The Vision was first mentioned in Menahem Ben-Sasson, "Firkovich's Second Collection: Notes on Historical and Halakhic Material," *Jewish Studies* 31 (1991): 47–67, at 61 [Hebrew]. On the unique features of the Karaite Genizah in Cairo and the circumstances of its transfer to Russia, see Zeev Elkin and Menahem Ben-Sasson, "Abraham Firkovich and the Cairo Genizahs in Light of his Personal Archive," *Pe'amim* 90 (2002): 51–95; for the first collection (Series A), especially 53–59 [Hebrew], and note 4, below. At the time, I sent copies of my reading of the manuscript to Prof. David Cook and Prof. Lorenzo DiTommaso, as they were preparing their studies of Daniel and Apocalyptic literature; see Lorenzo DiTommaso, *The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 87 n. 2, 93 n. 23, 97, 154, 184–185, 200, 461 (*Nevu'ot Daniel* [\$2.22]); Lorenzo DiTommaso, "The Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses: Works, Manuscripts, and Overview," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 94.2 (2018): 275–316, 306 no. 27; David B. Cook,

¹ See https://www.nli.org.il/he/discover/manuscripts/hebrew-manuscripts/itempage?docId=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS990000786990205171&vid=MANUSCRIPTS, accessed May 2, 2025.

Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 8 n. 19. See also Hillel Newman, “Midrashei Geula of Yehuda Even-Shmuel: A Methodological and Historical Critique,” in *Midrashei Geula: Chapters of Jewish Apocalypse Dating from the Completion of the Babylonian Talmud until the Sixth Millennium*, ed. Yehuda Even-Shmuel (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2017), xciii n. 93; Matthias Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel: Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 5 n. 7. The Vision discussed here is not close to another Genizah text, already known as “Vision of Daniel” or “The Vision of Daniel by the River Kebar,” from JTS-NYC MS Schechter 5, published almost a century ago (see DiTommaso, *Daniel* [§2.17], 162–170, 459–461).

For the current author first publications discussing the Vision at length, see Menahem Ben-Sasson, “Messiahs and Anti-Messiahs in the Vision of Daniel,” in *The Elder Will Serve the Younger: Myths and Symbols in Dialogue between Judaism and Christianity: A Tribute to Israel Jacob Yuval*, eds. Ram Ben-Shalom, Ora Limor, and Oded Israeli (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2022), 111–165 [Hebrew]; Menahem Ben-Sasson, “Inverting the Image of the Redeemer and his Enemies in Apocalyptic: An Example of Interreligious Discourse in Four Visions of Daniel,” *Zion* 87 (2022): 313–333 [Hebrew]; Menahem Ben-Sasson, “The Vision of Daniel” from the St. Petersburg Genizah,” *Harvard Theological Review* 115.3 (2022): 331–362; Menahem Ben-Sasson, “An Interreligious ‘Encounter’ in Four Visions of Daniel,” in *Religious and Intellectual Diversity in the Islamicate World and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Sarah Stroumsa*, eds. Sabine Schmidtke and Omer Michaelis (Leiden: Brill, 2024), 614–644; Menahem Ben-Sasson, “Two Similar versions of ‘Vision of Daniel’ Texts” [Hebrew], in a forthcoming festschrift. In these discussions, an initial platform for a connection between the visions was proposed. Still, they lack the detailed comparison between the new Visions of Daniel and the Qiṣṣa, an updated claim (compared to the previous one in which I sought to point out the influence of the Vision of Daniel on the author of QD) that both relied on one ancient source (see below, ch. 3), and the addition of the references to the Syriac visions that are presented here in detail.

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Copied, translated, annotated and introduced by Dan Shapira

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1 The Vision of Daniel—The Texts

1.1 Physical Characteristics, Date, and Provenance of the MS

The text, a MS at the St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293, is a copy of the Vision of Daniel, written in Hebrew in a Byzantine script, and made in the fourteenth century². The beginning is fragmentary, and its content is suggested to be reconstructed herein based on a detailed comparison with another vision attributed to Daniel, similar in many respects to this Vision. After the Vision, the copyist of this manuscript copied a story about a child and the Book of Genesis (three pages)³ and a chapter on the fast days (seven pages)⁴. They await publication in two different works that I hope to complete.

The Vision is but one item from a rich collection of manuscripts named for Abraham Firkovich that is found at the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg. This collection is among the world's most significant manuscript collections for the study of Judaism, if not the most important. The collection has three main parts: A. The First Firkovich Collection, sold to the library in 1862; B. The Samaritan Collection, sold in 1870; C. The Second Firkovich Collection, sold to the library in 1876.

Abraham Firkovich acquired and assembled these collections throughout his life, and they reflect different layers and areas of Jewish works through history. Firkovich was blessed with a sharp eye, broad knowledge, and good relations with communal leaders throughout the Jewish world, thanks to which he managed to add some of the best Jewish manuscripts to his collection. Concerning the Vision, it is worth focusing on the methods by which Firkovich organized the manuscript collections he assembled before the 1870s. He came into possession of these manu-

² This section selectively reproduces and further develops my earlier formulation; see Menahem Ben-Sasson, “‘The Vision of Daniel’ from the St. Petersburg Genizah,” *Harvard Theological Review* 115.3 (2022): 332–333.

³ See Anat Shapira, *A Midrash on the Ten Commandments: Text, Sources, and Interpretation* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 2005), 67–69, 178–179 [Hebrew]; Nissim ben Jacob, *An Elegant Composition concerning Relief after Adversity [Sefer Ma'asiyot ve-hu Hibbur Yafeh me-ha-Yeshu'ah]*, trans. and ed. Hayyim Zeev Hirschberg (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1954), 51–52 [Hebrew]; Shraga Abramson, *Five Books by Rabbi Nissim Gaon* (Jerusalem: Mekitze Nirdamim, 1965), 397–404 [Hebrew] (the version in this manuscript is closer to the version that appears on 400–403); Eli Yassif, *Ninety-Nine Tales: The Jerusalem Manuscript Cycle of Legends in Jewish Folklore of the Middle Ages* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2014), 231–232, 282 [Hebrew]; Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Collection of Tales in the Middle Ages* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 2004), 18–19 [Hebrew].

⁴ Shulamit Elizur, *Wherefore Have We Fasted? 'Megillat Ta'anit Batra' and Similar Lists of Fasts* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2007), 163–196 [Hebrew].

scripts while serving in various capacities and on his extensive travels: from his hometown of Lutsk, Ukraine, to Crimea, which then had the most significant concentration of Karaites, to Palestine (in 1830). On this journey and its return trip, he acquired many manuscripts in Constantinople and especially from the *genizot* of the Karaite synagogue in Jerusalem.

From the mid-1830s until 1841, Firkovich passed through many locations in Crimea and the Caucasus, returning with a glut of important, valuable primary sources, including ancient manuscripts, transcriptions of ancient tombstones, and many ethnographic remnants. It was a sort of “journey to *genizot* of southern Russia,” and after a cursory study of what he collected, Firkovich would make public announcements about what he found. These successful journeys brought Firkovich fame throughout Russia and throughout the world.

The ancient manuscripts and artifacts assembled from the East and from southern Russia starting in 1830 comprise the enormous collection that was later called the First Firkovich Collection. In 1856, Firkovich offered his manuscript collection to the Russian Imperial Public Library. In 1862, after much discussion, the library bought the collection for the massive sum of 125,000 rubles. (For comparison’s sake, the annual acquisitions budget of the library at the time was generally about 10,000 rubles.)

The First Firkovich Collection has been renamed RNL Yevr. I. This collection contains 830 manuscripts, 277 of them (numbers 554–830) are Karaite. Even though this collection is basically a Hebrew one, it does contain 75 Arabic manuscripts, mostly containing Karaite works (many of them biblical commentaries by Yefet ben ‘Eli and Salmon b. Yeruhim). The manuscripts in this collection are generally in good condition.⁵

5 Zeev Elkin and Menahem Ben-Sasson, “Abraham Firkovich and the Cairo Genizahs in Light of his Personal Archive,” *Pe’amim* 90 (2002): 51–95; Abraham Firkovich, *Avnei Zikaron: Ha-me’asef Reshimot ha-Matzevot al Kivrei Benei Yisra’el be-Hatzi ha-i Krim* (Vilnius: Fuenn and Rosenkranz, 1872), 2–5; A. Harkavy, *Altjüdische Denkmäler aus der Krim mitgetheilt von Abraham Firkowitsch, 1839–1872* (St. Petersburg: Mémoires de l’Académie Impériale de St.-Petersbourg, VIIe Série, 24, 1877; repr. Wiesbaden: Sändig, 1969); Avraam Harkavy and Hermann L. Strack, *Catalog der hebräischen Bibelhandschriften der kais. Öffentlichen Bibliothek in St. Petersburg* (St. Petersburg: C. Ricker; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1875); Tapani Harviainen, “Abraham Firkovich,” in *Karaite Judaism*, ed. Meira Polliack (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 883–884, esp. n. 39; Mikhail Kizilov, *Karaites through the Travelers’ Eyes: Ethnic History, Traditional Culture and Everyday Life of the Crimean Karaites According to Descriptions of the Travelers* (New York: Qirqisani Center, 2003); Dan Shapira, “Remarks on Avraham Firkowicz and the Hebrew Mejelis ‘Document’,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 59 (2006): 131–180; Dan Shapira, *Avraham Firkowicz in Istanbul (1830–1832): Paving the Way for Turkic Nationalism* (Ankara: Karam, 2003); Dan Shapira, “Yitshaq Sangari, Sangarit, Bezael Stern and Avraham Firkowicz: Notes on Two Forged Inscriptions,” *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 12 (2002–03): 223–260; Dan Shapira (ed.), *The Tombstones of the Cemetery of the Karaite Jews*

Genizah scholars have been conditioned by necessity to collect fragments of a work scattered in several different libraries to try to reconstruct them, to the degree possible. Exceptional in this regard is the Karaite Genizah in St. Petersburg, which was transferred there almost intact by Abraham Firkovich. This accounts for the appearance of continuous, nearly complete works in the Firkovich collections.

One such work is a new additional and different Vision of Daniel from the St. Petersburg Genizah, the subject of this publication.

From the genre of redemptive visions written by Jews, only a few works survive compared to contemporaneous works of other genres—like works of *halakhah*, philosophy, lore, narrative fiction, liturgical poetry, poetry, and grammar—of which many works have survived. Yet the dearth of surviving examples of this genre is not indicative of the role played by hopes for, and interest in, redemption for the people of that era.

In the present volume, we use the term ‘apocalypse’ without distinguishing it from ‘eschatology’ since it centers on a work from the literary genre that has come to typify ‘apocalyptic’ literature and because, according to standard definitions, the two terms have become similar in how they relate to the end of days. For instance, this is how they are defined in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

Apocalyptic literature, literary genre that foretells supernaturally inspired cataclysmic events that will transpire at the **end of the world**. A product of the Judeo-Christian tradition, apocalyptic literature is characteristically pseudonymous; it takes narrative form, employs esoteric language, expresses a pessimistic view of the present, and treats the final events as imminent.

Eschatology, the doctrine of the **last things**. It was originally a Western term, referring to Jewish, Christian, and Muslim beliefs about the end of history, the resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgment, the messianic era, and the problem of theodicy (the vindication of God’s justice). In the history of religion, the term eschatology refers to conceptions of the **last things**: immortality of the soul, rebirth, resurrection, migration of the soul, and the **end of time** ... Often these notions are contrasted with the experience of suffering in the world. Eschatological themes thrive during crises, serving as consolation for those who hope for a better world or as motivation for a revolutionary transformation of society.⁶

in *Cufut-Qal’eh (the Crimea): Report of the Ben-Zvi Institute Expedition. A Collection of Studies* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2008) [Hebrew]; David Sklare, “A Guide to Collections of Karaite Manuscripts,” in *Karaite Judaism*, 895–896.

⁶ Robert E. Lerner, “Apocalyptic Literature,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/art/apocalyptic-literature> accessed May 2, 2025; Richard Landes, “Eschatology,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/eschatology>, accessed May 2, 2025; see also Lorenzo DiTommaso “Apocalyptic Literature in the Global Imagination,” in *A Companion to World Literature*, vol. 1, ed. Ken Seigneurie (Oxford: Wiley, 2020), 215–226.

In many standard literary genres, even those that were not composed as typical apocalyptic works, the hope for redemption and the end of days is present in varying degrees of readiness and practicality, in context of interpretation or incidentally.

Visions of redemption that appear in apocalyptic works are unique in that they provide a detailed, concrete image of God's plans, including dynamic redemptive scenarios with all their different stages of manifestation. Such an image relies on the magnitude of the visionary's authority and on an ostensibly 'factual' basis: a solid factual foundation figured as the fulfillment of the prophecies detailed in the vision.

When the end of days did not arrive after the collapse of the Roman Empire, which was envisaged as the Fourth Empire, whose demise marks the beginning of the redemption, it was necessary to update the expectations of the faithful. Thus, in the Middle Ages, apocalyptic discourse was transferred from Rome to the history of the Arab Caliphate. That is, it was necessary to affect a paradigm change in a scheme that had already become fixed in the imagination. The intensity of the Persian and Arab conquests was such that it demanded an updated paradigm, which crystallized long before the composition of the Vision of Daniel before us.⁷

This fragmentary copy of the Vision has no title, but it should be described as a **Vision of Daniel** since Daniel is mentioned three times as having heard things from an angel. This is typical of apocalyptic visions, which require angelic assistance to interpret and decrypt them:

7 See Yehuda Even-Shmuel (ed.), *Midrashei Geula: Chapters of Jewish Apocalypse Dating from the Completion of the Babylonian Talmud until the Sixth Millennium*, 3rd ed. (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2017) [Hebrew]; this edition includes new introductions; Oded Irshai, "If You See Kingdoms Struggling against One Another, Anticipate the Footfalls of the Messiah": Chronography and Apocalypse in Late Antiquity," in Yehuda Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 3rd ed. (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2017), i–li (including an updated discussion on the dating of the Book of Zerubbabel, at xxviii–xxxii); Hillel Newman, "Midrashei Geula of Yehuda Even-Shmuel: A Methodological and Historical Critique," lii–xcvi; John Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic: A Postrabbinic Jewish Apocalypse Reader* (Atlanta: SBL, 2005); Martha Himmelfarb, *Jewish Messiahs in a Christian Empire: A History of the Book of Zerubbabel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017); Joseph Dan, *History of Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Shazar, 2008), 189–194, 215–218 [Hebrew], emphasizes the primacy and influence of the Book of Daniel (including on the early Christian Apocalypse of John) on intelligible paths to the eschaton and on the three things that are missing from its depictions of the eschaton (messianism, mysticism, and human action). As will be seen in the ensuing discussion, the Vision of Daniel keeps to this trend. On the updating of this paradigm over time, see Oded Irshai, "Dating the Eschaton: Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity," in *Apocalyptic Time*, ed. Albert I. Baumgarten (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 113–153; Joseph Yahalom, "The Transition of Kingdom in Eretz Israel as Conceived by Poets and Homilists," *Shalem* 6 (1992): 1–22 [Hebrew]; as well as the thorough updates in the aforementioned introductions by Irshai and Newman; Moshe Gil, "The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel in Judaeo-Arabic," *Revue des Études Juives* 165 (2006): 1–98. For new English translations of a few of these texts, accompanied by brief introductions, scholarly annotation and commentary, and synoptic studies of these texts, see Reeves, *Trajectories*.

I, Daniel, upon hearing these words from the mouth of the angel, I shuddered, I spoke rashly and said to the angel of God: What will be with my children, my people? He told me: Daniel incline your ear, open your eyes, and understand all that I speak to you, and all the words I have said to you are truth. (2b, 1–5, 2:6)

The author of the Vision concludes with a passage that indicates that he viewed the work as a vision that Jeremiah, Elijah, and Zerubbabel instructed him to write down, and which he revealed to Ezra the Scribe.

And I, Daniel, upon hearing these words, rejoiced greatly; I honored, extolled, and praised the Supreme King of kings, and I said to the angel: When will these visions [be fulfilled]? He told me: Lie with your forefathers and arise to accept your fate at the end of days. Thereupon Jeremiah and Elijah and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, came to me and said: Write down this vision. I revealed it to Ezra the Scribe, and it uplifted me; and I revealed the redemption of Israel, and about the scion, the son of [Jesse], so that [Ezra] reveals these secrets to the sages, for it will remain hidden until the time of Israel's salvation. Written and sealed. (4a, 8–16, 4:1–5)

The Vision of Daniel is an apocalyptic, pseudepigraphic work of divine, prophetic revelation. The Vision contains dominant historical, political, and messianic elements, and it is devoid of symbolic elements. It records no ascent to upper worlds and no calls to repentance as a precondition for redemption. The Vision plays out almost entirely (excepting the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem) on earth, and its active forces are mostly human or human-like, which impact the whole world, even though the purpose of the process is the redemption of Israel in Jerusalem. In the surviving parts of the Vision, Daniel speaks in the first person. According to the proposed reconstruction of the Vision, this was also the case in its first part. If this is indeed the style of the opening part of the Vision, it would exhibit a rare phenomenon: of the dozens of visions attributed to Daniel, only two—the Syriac Vision of Daniel and the Judeo-Persian Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl, are written thus. As will be detailed below, these two visions are closely linked to the Vision of Daniel before us.⁸

As a class, visions of Daniel are common in Christian apocalyptic visions and several Muslim ones as well, because the Book of Daniel is the only book in the Hebrew Bible that contains an apocalyptic vision, making Daniel a convenient attribution for pseudepigraphic writers. To this unique feature we can add the fact that the vision in the Book of Daniel is opaque, leaving plenty of room for later writers of visions to use his name and the central motifs of his book in their own works, expanding on his descriptions, projecting his writings and their knowledge of their own times onto a “future past” that is being realized before their eyes, and continuing from there to an apocalypse that conforms to the patterns that had crystallized in

8 On the links between these three works, see below, ch. 3.1 and ch. 3.2.

the apocalyptic literature. This class of “visions of Daniel” includes many dozens of works, written in various languages from late antiquity until the late medieval era.⁹

In the present volume, the Vision of Daniel is studied in connection with other apocalyptic visions—Christian, Muslim, and Jewish—due to the great similarity between them. An examination of their contents shows the similarities and differences between the Vision of Daniel and contemporaneous apocalyptic works, enabling us to identify the uniqueness and role of apocalyptic writing within medieval Jewry. Detailing the structure of the Vision highlights differences and similarities between it and other works, highlights the borrowing and restructuring patterns of the Vision, and allows us to propose a reconstruction of the outline and contents of the missing parts.

The Vision was written originally in typical medieval literary Hebrew. The main part of the Vision was composed in the mid-ninth century in the borderlands between Muslim Syria and Byzantium. Both time and place are established below based on historical figures and events described in detail within the Vision.

A note on this edition: Since the manuscript text is readable, a facsimile of it appears at the beginning of the edition, using high-quality images taken at the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg. This is followed by a diplomatic edition of the text, based on the lines in the manuscript. A translation of the diplomatic edition follows the Hebrew edition. A topical edition, designed for consecutive reading, likewise appears in both the original Hebrew and English translation, and it is divided into primary subjects—marked as chapters—and subsections—marked as verses. Within the footnotes and discussion chapters, references to the Vision appear in two forms. References to the diplomatic edition appear as an Arabic numeral (1, 2, 3) to indicate the manuscript folio number, immediately followed by ‘a’ or ‘b’, to indicate the ‘verso’ or ‘recto’ side of the page, respectively. This is followed by a comma and then an indication of the line number(s) on the relevant page. References to the topical editions are indicated by chapter and verse numbers in Arabic numerals, separated by a colon. Thus, ‘3a, 12–15’ refers to lines 12 to 15 of the verso side of page 3 in the diplomatic edition and manuscript, while ‘2:4–7’ refers to the fourth through seventh verses of chapter 2 in the topical edition, based on my proposed division of the text. When both schemes are used, they are separated by a comma. Thus, ‘3a, 9–10, 2:15’ refers to lines 9–10 of folio 3a, and the corresponding verse, 2:15, in the topical edition.

⁹ See Lorenzo DiTommaso, *The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); DiTommaso “The Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses: Works, Manuscripts, and Overview,” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 94.2 (2018). On the connection between the visions of Gabriel and Daniel, see Israel Knohl, “The Apocalyptic and Messianic Dimensions of the ‘Gabriel Revelation’ in their Historical Context,” in *Hazon Gabriel: New Readings of the Gabriel Revelation*, ed. Matthias Henze (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 39–59.

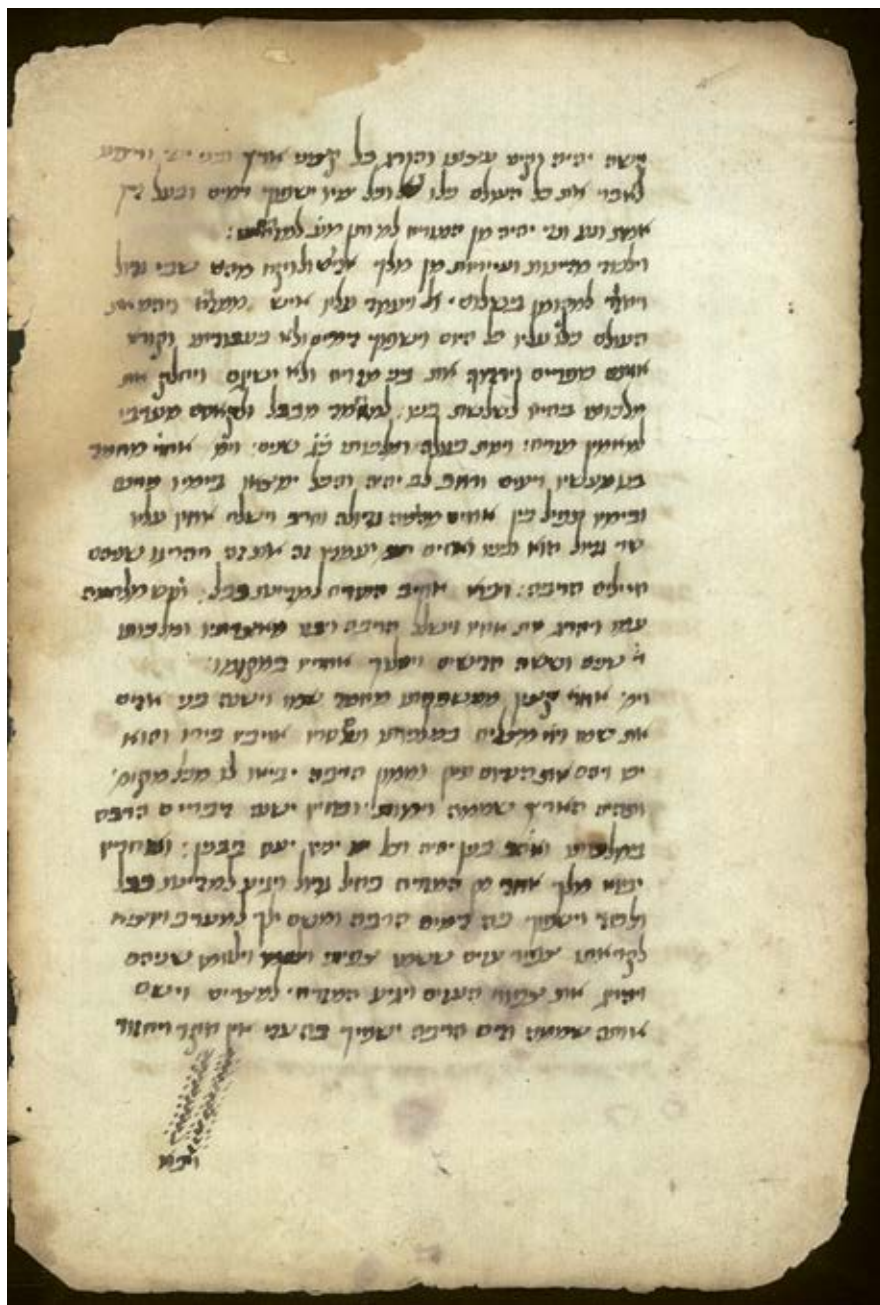


Fig. 2: MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293, folio 1b, “The Vision of Daniel”.

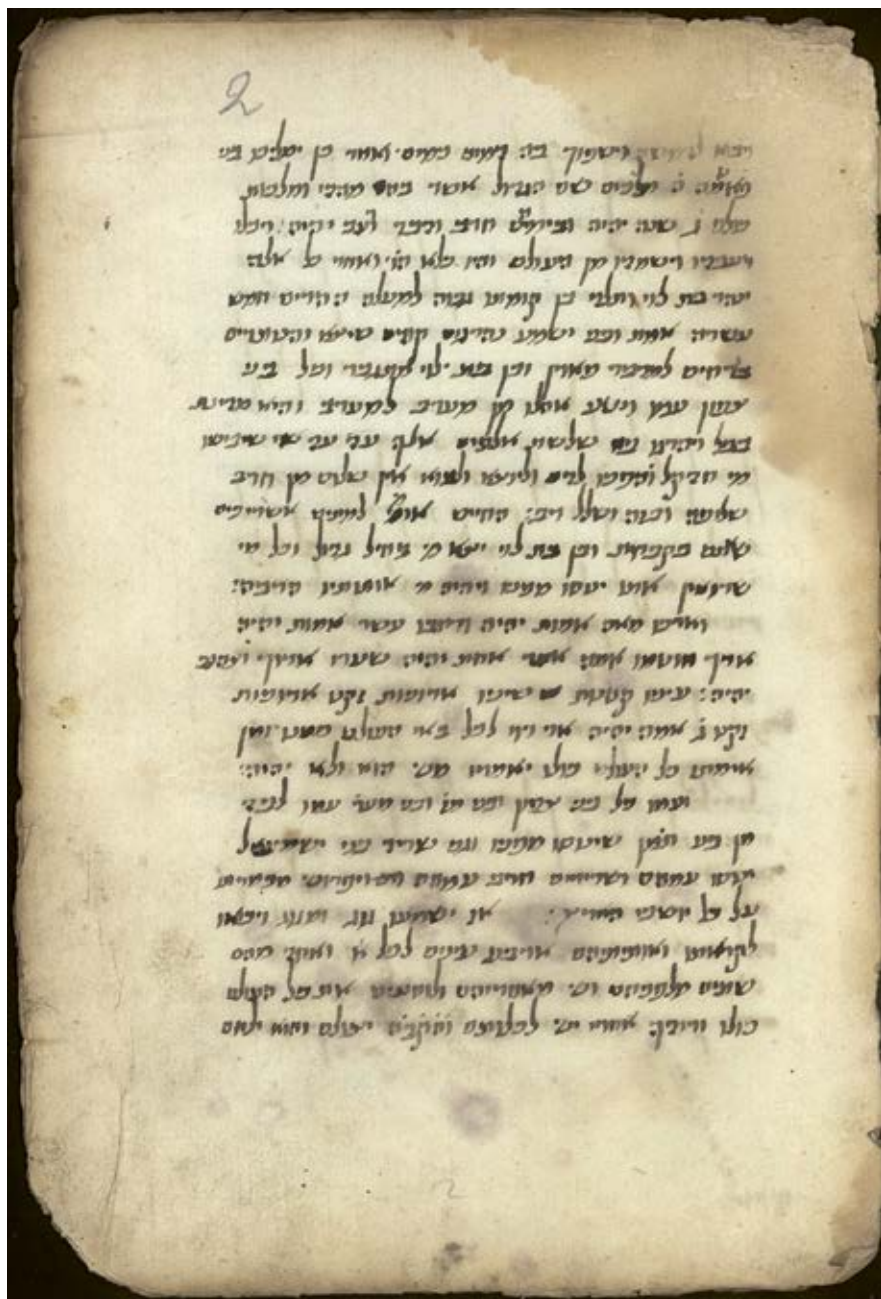


Fig. 3: MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293, folio 2a, “The Vision of Daniel”.

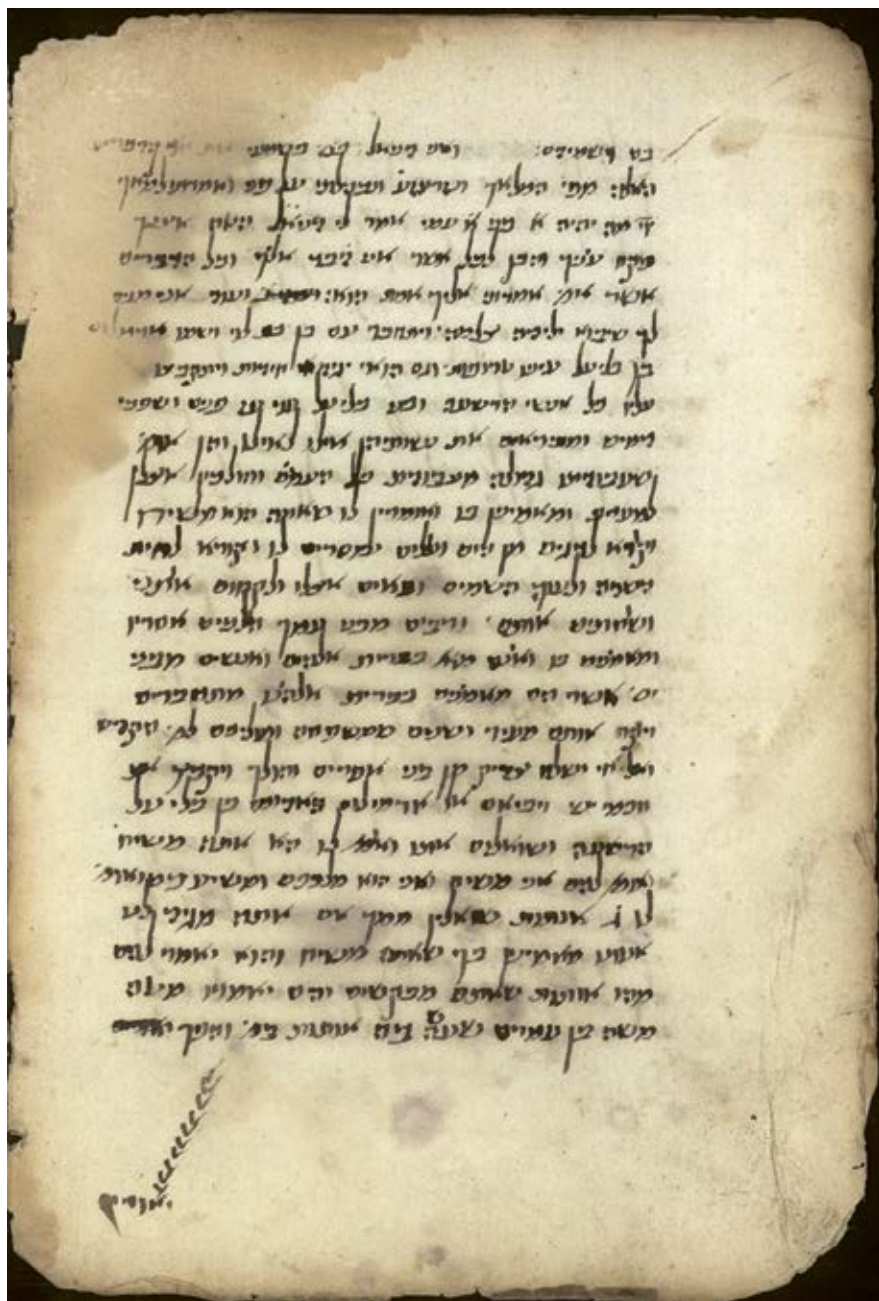


Fig. 4: MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293, folio 2b, “The Vision of Daniel”.

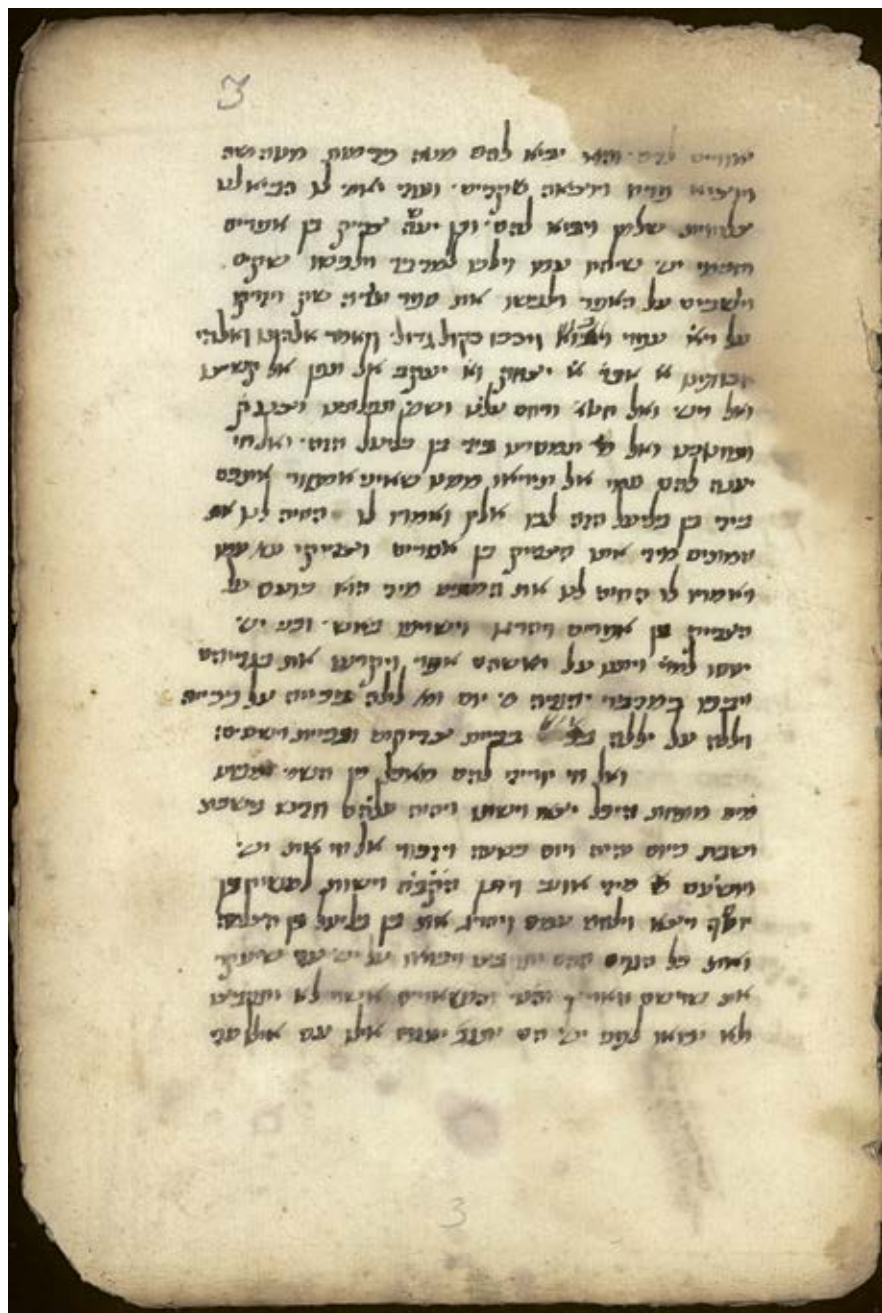


Fig. 5: MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293, folio 3a, “The Vision of Daniel”.

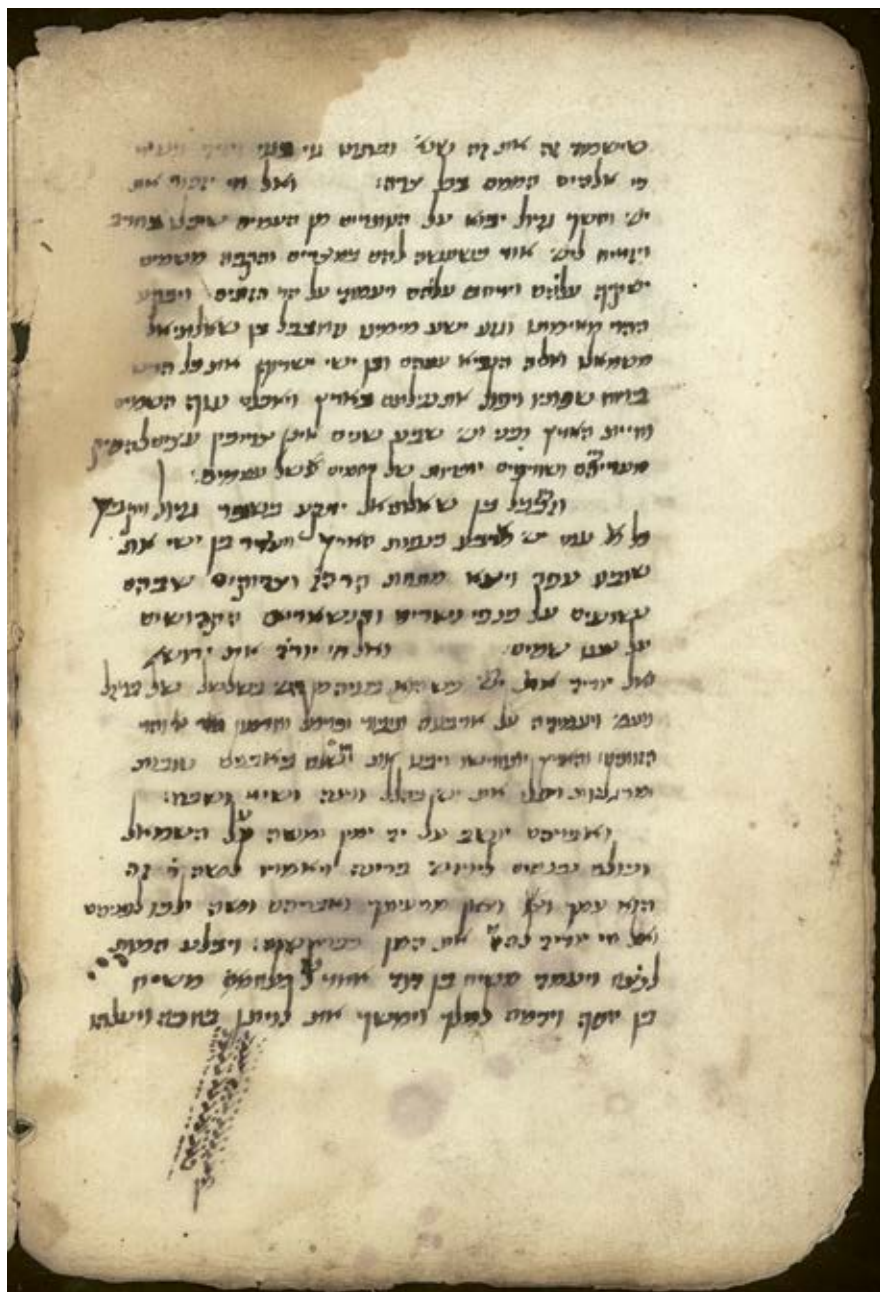


Fig. 6: MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293, folio 3b, "The Vision of Daniel".

1.3 The Vision of Daniel—A Diplomatic Edition

MS St. Petersburg National Library, Firkovich Collection, Series A 293

(formerly 22), folios 1a–4a

Pages 1–8: A Collection of Stories and Midrashim

[1a]

[א1]

1. X. Sulaymān. A great commotion will be in the East and in the West, 1. י' סולימאן מהומה גדולה תהיה במז(ח)[ר]ח ובמערב
2. and the king of Babylon will reign and be a head to the sages, and the king of the West will die 2. וימלוך מלך בבל ויהיה ראש לחכמ' [ים] וימת מלך מערב
3. in his days. His reign will last for 10 years: XI. 'Umar. In his days will be peace 3. בימיו¹⁰ מלכותו י' שנים¹¹: י"א עומר בימיו יהיה שלום
4. in the world and serenity among people. And he will reign 3 years: XII. Yazīd. 4. בעולם ושלוה יהיה לבני אדם ומ' [לך] ג' שנים¹²: י"ב יזיד
5. A wolf of the desert he will be, robbing people, and then he will die; 5. זאב ערבו[ת]¹³ יהיה וחומס את בני אדם ואחר כך ימות

10 This refers to the death of the Byzantine king. During Sulaymān's reign, Leo III the Isaurian ascended the Byzantine throne, although his predecessor, Theodosius III, had not died; instead, he was imprisoned in a monastery. Nevertheless, this detail does not negate the possibility of this interpretation.

11 Sulaymān's reign (715–717) lasted for two years, not ten. Further discussion of each caliph appears below, ch. 3.1, 79–91.

12 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz (717–720) had a reputation for pleasantness and mercy. Despite the brevity of his reign, Islamic tradition considers him one of the best Muslim caliphs, second only to the first four caliphs.

13 Jer 5:6. Genesis Rabbah (99:2) identifies the 'wolf of the desert' with the Kingdom of the Medes.

6. he will reign 8 years and 2 months. וּמִלְךָ 14 ח' שָׁנָה וּב' חֳדָשִׁים 15: י"ג 16 וְאַחֲרָיו
XIII. Then will reign Abū Dja'far. A מ' [וּלְךָ] אֲבוּגֶפֶר חֲכָם
great sage
7. with strong opinions he will be; like a גִּדּוּל בַּעַל דְּעָה יִהְיֶה וְדוּמָה לְזֹא(י)ב חוּמָס
wolf, he robs and hoards much gold וְקוֹבֵץ זֶהָב
8. and silver, leaving nothing for people וְכֶסֶף הִרְבָּה וְלֹא יוֹתִיר לְבָנֵי אָדָם וּמִבְקָשִׁים
who seek bread and find none לֶחֶם וְאֵין
9. for he will leave nothing in their עֵבֹר שְׁלֹא 17 יוֹתִיר בְּיָדָם מֵאֹמָה וּבִהְמָה
hands; they will offer animals for sale יִמְכֹּר
10. but there will be no buyer, for lack וְאֵין אִישׁ קוֹנֶה 18 אֹתוֹ וּמ(כ) [ב] לִי כֶסֶף
of money; he will bury treasures in [[וְח]] וִיטְמוֹן מִטְמוֹנִית 19
hiding places

14 There is a question as to whether this word (וּמִלְךָ) is of the inverted past tense, in which case it means “he will reign,” or the simple past (“he reigned”). The same question arises with respect to many verbs in this work. If it is in the simple past tense, then it is apparently a historical–narrative description rather than a prophetic future [AM]. The translation adopts the inverted past (or prophetic future tense).

15 Yazīd II b. ‘Abd al-Malik (720–724) was a cousin of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. During his reign, a series of military uprisings was brutally suppressed, marking the beginning of the civil war against the ‘Abbāsids. The copyist may have mistakenly denoted eight regnal years instead of four or five due to confusion of the Hebrew letters corresponding to four (ד) or five (ה) with the letter corresponding to eight (ח). There is also some confusion about the period from 720 to 754 (until the reign of Abū Dja’far), during which five Umayyad caliphs and the first ‘Abbāsīd caliph reigned, all of which is telescoped into the reign of Yazīd. The description of Abū Dja’far’s reign is also corrupted and was copied twice. Perhaps the copyist had a version that included most (assuming that some of the caliphs with shorter reigns were never part of the list) of the rulers of this period, but the beginning of the Hebrew spelling of Yazīd (יִזִּיד), which also corresponds to the number XVII (יז in Hebrew), let him to erroneously skip to the reign of Abū Dja’far, who was the seventeenth ruler on the original list. Alternatively, it is possible that the copyist skipped from one Yazīd to another, as there were three dominant rulers with that name during this period. None of them clearly fits the above description (see below, ch. 3.1 and 3.3).

16 As noted previously, it is possible that the ordinal number preceding Yazīd’s name was XVII (יז), which the copyist then changed to XIII (יג) to align it with the preceding ordinal numbers.

17 Medieval, primarily Karaite, Hebrew. According to the *Historical Dictionary*, the earliest attestation of *שְׁלֹא בַעֲבֹר* is in Benjamin al-Nahawendi’s 9th-cent. *Sefer Ha-Dinim* [AM].

18 This phrase is from Deut 28:68.

19 Hiding place.

11. And it will be revealed to the Ishmaelites in their salvation. He will be a great sage, a reader
 11. והוא נגלה לבני יש' [מעאל] בישועתם²⁰
 וחכם גדול יהיה וקורא
12. of books. He will go to pray at the temple of his mistake[n religion] and die on the way.
 12. ספרים והולך להתפלל בבית טעו(נ)תו²¹
 וימת בדרך
13. And his reign will be 22 years, whereupon he will give away his ring so that it will not be left
 13. ומלכותו כ"ב שנים²² ואחר כך נותן טבעתו
 שלא יעזב
14. in the hands of the members of his house XVII [XIV?], and those who remain seek, but there is nothing, for
 14. בידיהם לבני ביתו י"ז [ד?] ²³ והנשארים
 מבקשים ואין בעבור
15. he will leave nothing in their hands; they will offer animals for sale, but there will be no
 15. שלא יעזב בידיהם מאומה ובהמה (ו) [י] מכר
 ואין מי
16. buyer, for lack of money in their hands. He will hoard silver and gold and bury it
 16. שיקנה מ(כ) [ב] לי כסף בידם ומקבץ כסף
 וזהב ויטמן
17. in hiding places; and in the future it will be revealed to people in their salvation
 17. במטמ(י) [ו] נית והוא לעתיד שיגלה לבני אדם
 בישועתם

²⁰ The same idea is articulated again in line 17: “in the future it will be revealed to people in their salvation.” According to Isaiah 45:3, after the arrival of the messiah, treasures will be disclosed to Israel. The same idea appears in *Nistarot De-Rashbi* [“The Secrets of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai”]; (published in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 162–198, and translated in Reeves, *Trajectories*, 78–89) *Tefillat [Prayer of] R. Shimon bar Yohai* (published in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 268–286, and translated in Reeves, *Trajectories*, 90–105). See below, 3.3.1, 94–102.

²¹ A house of idol worship. This refers to Abū Dja’far al-Manṣūr’s death during his hajj to Mecca.

²² Abū Dja’far al-Manṣūr (754–775) is mentioned with his common name, not his regal name (al-Manṣūr), as others are. This is likely an allusion to his low birth; his mother, Sallāma, was deemed Berber slave girl. His reign is discussed in greater detail below, 3.3.1. Concerning the following duplication of the description of his reign, see below, 94–97.

²³ This may be the ordinal number of the next ruler, XIV (ד), where the Hebrew letter corresponding to four (ד) was mistakenly replaced with the letter corresponding to seven (ז). This substitution disrupted the text’s linear flow, leading to the omission of the ordinal numbering of subsequent rulers (see ch. 3.3.1 below).

18. and he will be a great sage and a reader of books, and he will ask and seek
18. וחכם גדול יהיה וקורא ספרים יהיה וישאל וידרוש
19. and demand wisdom; and he will go to celebrate at the temple of his mistake[n religion] and die on the way
19. ויבקש חכמה וילך לחוג בבית טעותו וימת בדרך
20. And his reign will be 22 years, whereupon he will give his ring to the members of his household.
20. ומלכותו כ"ב שנה ואחר כן יתן טבעתו לבני ביתו.
21. After him will reign[XIV] Mahdī his son. He will be wise, and a lover of harlotry
21. וימלך אחריו מהדי בנ(י)[ו] חכם יהיה ואהב זנות
22. he will be; he will profligately spend silver and gold in the world. There will be peace, and falsehood
22. יהיה וכסף וזהב יפזר בעו¹לם ושלום יהיה ושקר
23. will proliferate in the world. He will go to the land of the East and die there, and his reign
23. ירבה בעולם²⁴ וילך לארץ מזרח וימת שם ומלכותו
24. will last 10 years: [XV] And after him will reign Musa, his youngest son; he will be fluid
24. עשר שנים²⁵: וימלך אחר[יו] מ<ו>סי בנ(י)[ו] (ש)[צ]עיר²⁶ ושטוף
25. of mind and his desire will be to destroy the world. His reign will be
25. בדעתו²⁷ יהיה ורצונו לאבד את העולם ומלכותו

²⁴ This follows the Mishnah, Sotah 9:15, which concerns the absence of truth in the period preceding the coming of the Messiah.

²⁵ Abū 'abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'abd Allāh al-Manṣūr (775–785), who was called al-Mahdī, was known as a lover of erotic poetry and music. During his reign, poets received generous patronage. His generosity was likened to “waves of charity,” and he squandered huge sums from the royal treasury, left full by Abū Dja'far.

²⁶ This is apparently a vocalization of the Hebrew word for “young” (צעיר) and should be read as: “His younger son”. [AM].

²⁷ This is a unique expression. Perhaps it means “inundated with immorality in his mind” (נחוש בדעתו) or “determined of mind” (שטוף זימה בדעתו) [AM].

26. one year and five days. [XVI] And after him will reign Hārūn his son; he will be a roaring lion and a harsh judge

26. שנה אחת וחמש[ה] 28 ימים 29 וימלוך אחרייו הארון בנו ארי שואג יהיה <ובעל-דין>

[1b]

[1b]

1. who upholds his designs and kills all the officers of the land and the sons of Ishmael; his desire

1. קשה 30 יהיה ו[מ]קים עצתו 31 והורג כל קציני ארץ ובני יש[מעאל] ורצונו

2. will be to destroy the world in its entirety, and all his days he will shed blood. He will judge with

2. לאבד את כל העולם כלו [[כל]] וכל ימיו ישפוך דמים ובעל דין

3. truth, and he will rove and wander from East to West and from West to East:

3. אמת ונע ונד יהיה מן 32 המזרח למ[ערב] ומן מע[רב] למזרח:

4. And he will capture cities and towns from the King of Edom and take a great many captives from them,

4. וילכוד מדינות ועיירות מן מלך אד<ו>ם ולוקח מהם שבי גדול

5. And he will return to his place in peace. And a man from the East will rise against him and stir up the

5. ויחז<ו>ר למקומו בשלום. [[ול]] ויעמד עליו איש ממז<ר>ח ויהם 33 את

28 Since the proper Hebrew form of numbers is usually used (חמשה ימים), it appears that an apostrophe was omitted [AM].

29 Abu Muḥammad Mūsā ibn Mahdī al-Hādī, the fourth 'Abbāsid caliph, ruled in Baghdad for one year, from 785–786. According to tradition, he attempted to poison his mother; perhaps this is why the Vision deem him insane.

30 As in the morning benedictions (בעל דין קשה) and immediately below the phrase “a judge of truth” (בעל דין אמת) [AM].

31 He upholds his designs (מקיים עצתו). Based on Isa 44:26: “But uphold the word of My servant and fulfill the design of My messengers.”

32 Using the separate Hebrew preposition for “from” (מן) instead of the prefix (מ-) may suggest Arabic influence [AM]. See also note 62 below.

33 The basic language of the text is Biblical Hebrew, and this (ויהם) is an outstanding example of it [AM].

6. whole world against him all day long. העולם כלו עליו כל היום וישפוך דמים³⁴ ולא
He will shed blood, but not by his own בעבוד/רתו[?] וקורא
deed [?]. He will call
7. them heretics and pursue the people אותם כופרים וירדוף את בני מזרח ולא ישיגם
of the East but not overtake them. He ויחלק את
will divide
8. his kingdom in his lifetime among his מלכותו בחייו לשלשת בניו: למ[א]>ח<מד
three sons: Muḥammad in Babylon, the מבבל ולקאסם מערבי
West to Ḳāsim
9. and the East to Ma'mūn: And he למאמין מזרח: וימת בגולה ומלכותו כ"ג
will die in exile, and his reign will be שנים³⁶: וימ'[לוד] אחר'[ין] מחמד
23 years: After him will reign [XVII]
Muḥammad

³⁴ “Shedder of blood” (שופך דמים) is a Rabbinic phrase, though the singular (שופך דם) is biblical (Gen 9:6) [AM].

³⁵ I.e., not by his own hand, but by proxy [AM]. However, in 2b, line 10 below, the expression for “his own deed” (עבודתו) is used in the sense of obedience and submission. Here, it is perhaps to be read as “and not in his own wrath” (ולא בעבו(ו)רתו), implying that he would shed blood not out of anger, but because he considered the slain to be “heretics.”

³⁶ Hārūn al-Rashīd (786–809) devoted most of his reign to holy war. When he was still young, in 779, his father, the caliph al-Mahdi, dispatched him at the head of a military campaign that penetrated the heart of the Byzantine Empire. Due to his success, he was appointed ruler of the western portions of the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate. In 781, Hārūn al-Rashīd returned to Byzantium and advanced to its capital through a great series of victories. The Byzantines requested a cease-fire in exchange for a large monetary compensation. Six years before he died, he arranged how his kingdom would be inherited: he declared his eldest son, al-Amīn, as his heir; to his younger son, al-Ma’mūn, he gave the district of Merw, the capital of Ḳhūrāsān, which was declared autonomous. The appointment of his heirs began on 794; in response to the wishes of members of his family, al-Rashīd named as his first successor Muḥammad (al-Amīn), the only caliph born to parents both of whom were ‘Abbāsīds; proclaimed initially in Ḳhūrāsān by his guardian al-Faql b. Yahyā al-Barmakī, he subsequently received the bay’a in Baghdād. As for ‘Abd Allāh (al-Ma’mūn), he had to wait until the age of puberty to be declared second heir of Rashīd, in 183/799, under the guardianship of Dja’far b. Yahyā al-Barmakī, the caliph’s favorite. While reviving the Marwānīd tradition of appointing two heirs to the throne in order to guarantee the stability of the regime and the future of the dynasty, al-Rashīd made an innovation in appointing a third successor, al-Ḳāsim (al-Mu’tasim), the son of a concubine, sponsored by his ‘Abbāsīd guardian ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ṣāliḥ. Following Hārūn’s death, the plan was not carried out; a civil war broke out, leading to the disintegration of the centralized ‘Abbāsīd empire. One wonders whether the apocalyptic writers’ portrayal of the tripartite division between al-Amin, al-Ma’mūn, and al-Qasim is basically a Shem, Ham and Japheth-type division of

10. his son; he will be wicked in deed but generous, and in his day everybody will earn a living. 10. בנו מעשיו רעים ורחב לב יהיה והכל ימצאו בימיו פרנס[ה]
11. And in his day tumult and sword will dwell among brothers, and his brother will send against him 11. ובימיו תפ(י)[ו]ל בין אחים מה<ו>מה גדולה וחרב וישלח אחיו עליו
12. a great general. He and his sons and brothers will abuse each other and both will kill 12. שר גדול הוא ובניו ואחים [[יע]] י[ת]עמרו זה את[!] זה ויהרגו שניהם
13. many soldiers: [XVIII] His spurned brother will come to the country of Babylon and wage war 13. חיילים הרבה³⁷: ויבוא אחי(ב)[ו] המודח³⁸ למדינת בבל ו<י>עש מלחמה
14. with him. He will kill his brother, loot much, and plunder his treasures. His reign will be 14. עמו ויהרג את אחיו וישלל הרבה ויבז מאצרתיו ומלכותו
15. 4 years and 6 months. After him, his brother will reign in his place: 15. ד' שנים וששה חדשים וימלוך אח(ר)י³⁹ במקומו⁴⁰:

the world, with al-Amin as Ham, and Ma'mūn as Shem, and al-Mu'tasim as Japheth the conqueror. [David B. Cook].

³⁷ Al-'Amīn Abū Mūsā Muḥammad b. Hārūn (809–813) succeeded his father, Hārūn. The vision describes the war first on its eastern side, in the Ray region, where the battle takes place between 'Alī ibn 'Isā ibn Māhān (Al-'Amīn's camp) and Ṭāhir ibn Ḥusayn (Al-Māmun's camp), and then in Baghdad. In that campaign, Al-'Amīn was killed. The Vision completes the section on the death of Al-'Amīn in the next section, describing the era of Al-Ma'mūn, along with the number of years of Al-'Amīn's reign.

³⁸ The term for 'spurned' (מודח) is common in early Hebrew liturgical poetry, based on Isa 13:14.

³⁹ The original (אחרי) is a mistake caused by similarity to the next line. "His brother" (אחיו) is correct.

⁴⁰ The reign of Abū al-'Abbās Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn al-Ma'mūn (813–833) began with a struggle between him ("the spurned") and his brother (Al-'Amīn) over Al-'Amīn's refusal to accept the Treaty of Mecca (802), which determined the succession after Hārūn al-Rashīd. The struggle ended with the killing of Al-'Amīn, after Al-'Amīn had ruled for four and a half years, and the accession of Al-Ma'mūn, whose initials are deposed and finally declared to the throne of the caliph (he would reign in his place). The Vision does not specify how many years Al-Ma'mūn ruled, nor do the 'Abbāsīd rulers who followed him. His twenty-year reign is notable for the flourishing of science and culture, as well as the construction of buildings that support these activities.

16. [XIX] And after him will reign an officer from his family, Muḥammad by name, and people will change
 16. וימ' [לודך] אחר' [יו] קצין ממשפחתו מחמד שמו וישנה! [!] בני אדם
17. his name. God will bring success to his kingdom, and his enemies will be given in his hands;
 17. את שמו ויו' מצליח במלכותו ונמ<ס>רו אויביו בידו והוא
18. he will strike and stir up Hindu-stan [?], and they will bring him much money from everywhere.
 18. יכ(ו)[ה] ויהם את הגדוס תאן [?] וממון הרבה יביאו לו מכל מקומ' [ות]
19. And the land will be desolate, and he will die. In his life he will change many things
 19. ותהיה הארץ שממה וימות. ובחייו ישנה דברים הרבה
20. in his kingdom, and he will love building; all his days he will be involved in building: [XX] After him
 20. במלכותו וא>ו-הב בנין יהיה וכל [[ימ]] ימיו יעש בבנין⁴¹:
21. another king from the East will come with a large force and will reach the country of Babylon.
 21. יבוא מלך אחר מן המזרח בחיל גדול ויגיע למדינת בבל
22. He will capture it and shed much blood. And from there he will go to the West, and against him will
 22. וילכוד וישפוך בה דמים הרבה ומשם ילך למערב ויוציא [!]
23. stand the He-Goat whose name is Zafini/Zufyani and they will both do battle,
 23. לקראתו צפיר עזים ששמו צפיני [[וילמו]] וילחמו שניהם
24. And he will kill the He-Goat, and the Easterner will come to Egypt, and lay
 24. ויהרג את צפ(ו)[י] העזים ויגיע המזרחי למצרים וישם

41 Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd, Al-Mu'taṣim bi'llāh. He was Al-Ma'mūn's half-brother. Rebellions and wars in the East and West marked Al-Mu'taṣim's reign (833–842). His great successes in battles against Byzantium provided a platform for messianic expectations and eschatological writing. This awakening also serves as a platform for the development of expectations during the reign of his son, Al-Wāthiq, in view of the rise of a messianic movement with ties to the Umayyad dynasty in Syria. The Vision describes Al-Mu'taṣim's occupation with building and is directed at building the city of Samarra.

25. it waste. He will shed an inestimable amount of blood therein. And he will turn back

25. אותה שממה ודם הרבה⁴² ישפ[ו]ן דך בה
עד אין חקר ויחזור

[2a]

[א2]

1. and come to Damascus and shed blood in it like water. Then the sons of

1. ויבוא לדמשק וישפוך בה דמים כמים⁴³ ואחר
כן ימליכו בני

2. Faṭīma will crown 5 kings: The name of the most senior among them is [XX] Maḥdī, and his reign

2. פא<ט>מה ה' מלכים שם הגדול אשר בהם
מהדי ומלכות

3. will be 3 years. In their days, there will be sword, pestilence, and famine: and they will be erased

3. שלו⁴⁴ ג' שנה יהיה ובימי>ה<ם חרב ודבר
ו>ר<עב⁴⁵ יהיה: ויכלו

4. and pass from the world as though they never were: After all of these,

4. ויעברו וישמדו מן העולם והיו כלא>ה<ו:
ואחר כל אלה

5. the Daughter of Levi will become pregnant and give birth to a son; his stature will be fifteen cubits

5. תהר בת לוי ותלד בן קומתו גבוה למעלה
ההרים חמש

6. higher than the mountains; the Ishmaelites will be killed beforehand, and those who remain

6. עשרה אמ[ת] [ה] ובני ישמע[אל] נהרגים
קודם שיצא והנותרים

7. will flee to the wilderness of Paran. The Son of the Daughter of Levi will grow stronger, and all the

7. ב>ו<רחים למדבר פארן⁴⁶ ובן בת לוי מתגבר
וכל בני

⁴² If the Hebrew adverb for “much” (הרבה) qualifies the noun “blood” (דם), then the adjectival form (רב) should be used instead. The adverb appears to modify the verb “will shed” (ישפוך), meaning “he will shed an inestimable amount of blood” (ישפוך הרבה עד אין חקר) [AM]. However, the use of the adverb may be influenced by line 22 above (דמים הרבה).

⁴³ Abū Jaʿfar Hārūn ibn Muḥammad Al-Wāthiq (842–847), like his father, arrived in Baghdad from Samarra. The Vision hints at some of the campaigns he had to face: two rebellions in Baghdad, which were suppressed with great force and at a heavy cost in blood (in 843 and 846); a campaign against Armenia, greater Syria; and the reviving of the Miḥna (an inquisition against heretics) in Egypt, the purpose of which was to persecute those who did not adopt the proper theology.

⁴⁴ This construct (ומלכות שלו) is clearly Rabbinic Hebrew [AM].

⁴⁵ Ezek 14:21.

⁴⁶ The link between Ishmael and the wilderness of Paran is based on Gen 21:21.

8. Northerners along with him. And he will pitch his tent from East to West, which is the country of
[מזרח] אהלו מן (מערב) [מזרח]
למערב והיא מדינת
9. Babylon. In it they will kill three thousand and a thousand until the waters of the Tigris become
9. בבל ויהרגו בה שלשת אלפים [ו] אלף [[עד]]
עד [[שי]] שיבישו
10. dried and turn to blood. Those who come or go will have no respite from the drawn sword,
10. מי חדקל ו> הפכו לדם וליוצא ולב(ו)א אין
שלום מן חרב
11. looting, and much plundering: The living will say to the dead, Fortunate are you
11. שלופה ובזה ושלל רב: החיים אומ' [רים]
למתים אשריכם
12. for you are in graves. And the Son of the Daughter of Levi will go forth with a large army, and everyone
12. שאתם בקברות⁴⁷ ובן בת לוי יצא [[מ']]
בחיל גדול וכל מי
13. who sees him will flee from before him. And he will have many signs:
13. שרואין אתו ינוסו מפניו ויהיה מ' [ספר]
אותותיו⁴⁸ הרבה:
14. He will be a hundred cubits tall and ten cubits wide;
14. וארכו מאה אמות יהיה ורחבו עשר אמות
יהיה
15. the length of his nose will be one cubit. His hair will be long and blond:
15. ארך חטמו⁴⁹ אמה [[אחד]] אחת יהיה שערו
ארוך וצהוב
16. His eyes will be small, his teeth long, his beard long
16. יהיה: עיניו קטנות⁵⁰ [[ש]] שיניו ארוכות
זקנו ארוכות [!]
17. his beard 3 cubits long. Woe and misery betides all the people of the world from him
17. זקנו ג' אמה יהיה אוי ווי [=ואבוי⁵¹] לכל
באי העולם ממנו ומן

⁴⁷ Based on midrashic traditions about Jer 22:10.

⁴⁸ The author of the Vision uses same term, 'signs' (אותות, Syr. 'atwata'), to describe both distinguishing features of a figure's appearance and the wonders that a figure performs to demonstrate reliability. See below, ch. 4.1.2.

⁴⁹ The Rabbinic Hebrew term for "nose" (חוטם) is used here, not the biblical Hebrew term (אף) [AM].

⁵⁰ Perhaps based on Zech 11:17.

⁵¹ Based on Prov 23:29–30.

18. and from dread of him. The whole world will say that he is Messiah, but he will not be:

18. אימתו כל העולם כולו יאמרו משי' [ח] הוא ולא יהיה:

19. And with him will be all Northerners, and the Easterners and Westerners as well, except

19. ועמו כל בני צפון ובני מז' [רח] ובני מער' [ב] עמו לבד

20. for the Southerners, who will flee from him; and a remnant of the Ishmaelites

20. מן בני ת' <י' מן שינוסו מפניו וגם שריד בני ישמעאל

21. will flee with them, and survivors of the sword along with them. And he will spread his net

21. ינוסו עמהם ושרידי (ם) חרב עמהם [[ויס]] ויפרוש מכמרתו

22. over all the inhabitants of the earth: Then Gog and Magog will hear and come

22. על כל יושבי הארץ: אז ישמעו גוג ומגוג ויבואו

23. to meet him; their signs are: each of them has four eyes,

23. לקראתו ואות (י) [ו] תיהם ארבע עינים לכל א' [חד] ואחד מהם

24. two in front of them and two behind them, and they pressure the whole world.

24. שתיים מלפניהם וש' [תיים] מאחריהם⁵² ולוח-צים את כל העולם

25. He chases Israel to destroy them, but the Holy One, blessed be He, will save them; and He will fight

25. כולו ורודף אחרי יש' [ראל] לללותם וה' ק' ב' ה' ⁵³ יצילם והוא ילחם

[2b]

[ב2]

1. them and destroy them: And I, Daniel, upon hearing these words

1. בם וישמידם: ואני דניאל [[בש']] בשמעי את [[את]] הדברים

2. from the mouth of the angel, I shuddered, I spoke rashly and said to the angel

2. האלה מפי המלאך ונודעזע' [תי] ונבהלתי על פנ' ⁵⁴ ואמרתי למ' <ל' אד'

⁵² Perhaps based on Ezek 1:5–19, which describes four beasts with four faces and four wings, and “their rims were covered all over with eyes.” Several early apocalyptic texts describe the Antichrist as having two pupils in each eye.

⁵³ This name for God (הקדוש ברוך הוא) is a Rabbinic Hebrew expression. Likewise, 3a, 21 and 3b, 4.

⁵⁴ The copyist might have written פני instead פי as in Eccl 5:1. [Elli Fischer (=EF)].

3. of God: What will be with my children, my people? He told me: Daniel incline your ear;
 3. יו"י מה יהיה א' [ת] בני א' [ת] עמי אמר לי
 דניאל הטה אזנך
4. open your eyes, and understand all that I speak to you, and all the words
 4. פקח ע' >ניד⁵⁵ והבן לכל אשר אני דבר
 אל >ד וכל הדברים
5. I have said to you are truth. And I further tell
 5. אשר [[אמ']] אמרתי אליך אמת הוא⁵⁶:
 [[ועד]] ועוד אני מגיד
6. you that the offspring of the Female Figure will join with the Son of the Daughter of Levi; his name is Armilus,
 6. לך שיבוא יליד(ה) [ה] צלמה ויתחבר עם בן
 בת לוי ושמו ארמלוס
7. a son of Belial, bleary-eyed. He will also speak riddles. They will gather to him—
 7. בן בליעל עיניו טרופות⁵⁷ וגם הוא יגיד [[חי]]
 חידות ויתקבצו
8. all the wicked men and sons of Belial and a ruthless nation of spillers
 8. עליו כל אנשי הרשעה ובני בליעל וגוי עז
 פנים⁵⁸ ושפכי
9. of blood who permit their wives to one another. They will say that
 9. דמים ומתיר(א)ים את נשותיהן אילו לאילו⁵⁹
 והן אומ' [רים]
10. serving him is greater than serving any of the peoples. They will go to him,
 10. שעבודתו גדולה מעבודת כל העם >ס⁶⁰
 והולכין אצלן
11. to the West, and believe in him and tell him: You are Messiah.
 11. למערב ומאמינן בו ואומרין לו שאתה הוא
 משיח
12. He then calls for fish from the sea, and they emerge and are given to him; he calls for the beast
 12. וק>רא לדגים מן הים וע>לים נמסרים
 לו וקורא לחית

⁵⁵ Based on Dan 9:18.

⁵⁶ Based on Dan 8:25, which emphasizes the truth of the visions to Daniel. See also Dan 10:20 and 11:1–2.

⁵⁷ The copyist might have had written טרופות instead of טרוטות (see: BT San 107b [=BT Sot. 47a]) [EF].

⁵⁸ Deut 28:50.

⁵⁹ This (אילו לאילו) and the verbs that follow immediately (ואומרין) are Rabbinic Hebrew [AM]. See also Jer 29:23, and the discussion below, ch. 2.2, 70–71.

⁶⁰ I.e., serving him is more prestigious than serving others. See also above, 1b, 6, and the note there.

13. of the field and the bird of the sky
and they come to him. They take them
א-ו-תם 13. השדה ולעוף השמים ובאים אצלו ולקחום
14. and slaughter them. And many of
your people will follow him,
ה-ו-לכים אחריו 14. וש-ו-חתיים[!] אותם. ורבים מבני עמך
15. believing in him and not believing
in the covenant of our God. And people
from among the children
א-ל-ה-י-ו ואנשים מבני 15. ומאמ-י-נים בו וא-י-גם מא' [מינים] בברית
16. of Israel who believe in our God's
covenant join.
א-ל-ה-י-ו מתחברים 16. יש' [ראל] אשר הם מאמ-י-נים בברית
17. And He will take them—one per
town and two per family—and lead
them to the Holy Place.
ומוליכם למ' [קום] הקדש 17. ויקח אותם [אחד] מעיר ושנים ממשפחה⁶¹
18. And the living God will send a
righteous man from the children of
Ephraim, who will go and gather
ויקבץ את 18. ואל חי ישלח צדיק מן בני אפרים והולך
19. the sages of Israel and bring them
to Armilus the Edomite, the wicked son
of Belial,
בן בליעל 19. חכמי יש' [ראל] ויביאם אל ארמילוס האדומי
20. and they will ask him: Are you Mes-
siah?
הא[ם] אתה משיח 20. הרשעה ושואלים אתו וא-ו-מ' [רים] לו
21. And he will say to them: I am
Messiah, and I am your king and your
redeemer. They will say
ומשיעכם ואומ' [רים] 21. ואומ' [ר] להם אני משיח ואני הוא מלככם
22. to him: We ask for three signs from
you. If you tell us,
לו ג' אותות שואלין ממך אם אתה מגיד לנו 22. לו ג' אותות שואלין ממך אם אתה מגיד לנו
23. we believe you that you are Mes-
siah. He will say to them:
להם 23. אנחנו מאמינים בך שאתה משיח והוא יאמר
24. What are the signs that you ask?
And they will say: The Staff
מטה 24. מהו אותות שאתם מבקשים והם יאמרו

61 Based on Jer 3:14.

25. of Moses, son of Amram, with which he performed signs in Egypt and turned
[3a]
25. משה בן עמרם שע<ש>ה בה [!] ⁶²אותות במ' [צרים] והפך [יאור]
1. The rivers to blood. And he will bring them a staff that resembles the Staff of Moses
1. יאורים לדם והוא יביא להם מטה כדמות מטה משה
2. and it will bud flower and yield almonds. And they will also tell him: Bring us
2. ויוציא פרח ויוציאה [!] שקדים. ועוד יאמ' [רו] לו הביא לנו
3. the Jar of Manna, and he will bring it to them. And so will do the righteous Ephraimite
3. צלוחית שלמן ויביא להם. וכן יע<ש>ה צדיק בן אפרים
4. and the sages of Israel who will be with him: They will go to the desert and wear sackcloth
4. וחכמי יש' [ראל] שיהיו עמו וילכו למדבר וילבשו שקים
5. and sit on the ashes and dress the Torah scroll in sackcloth and sprinkle
5. וי>ו>שבים על האפר וילב' [י] שו את ספר ת>ו>רה שק ויזרקו
6. dust on their heads and they will come and weep in a loud voice and say: Our God, God of
6. על רא' [שם] עפר ⁶³וי>ב>ואו ויבכו בקול גדול. ויאמר [ו] אלהינו ואלהי
7. our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob: Overlook our stubbornness,
7. אבותינו א' [להי] אבר' [הם] א' [להי] יצחק וא' [להי] יעקב אל תפן אל קשיינו
8. our wickedness, and our sins; and have mercy on us, and hear our prayers and cries
8. ואל רש' [עינו] ואל חטא' [תינו] ⁶⁴ורחם עלינו ושם' [ע] תפלותינו וצעק' [תנו]

⁶² The author treats the word for staff (מטה) as feminine, which indicates that he thought in Arabic (عصا).

⁶³ The copyist apparently replaced ashes (אפר) with dust (עפר) in lines 5 and 6 [EF].

⁶⁴ Based on Deut 9:27 (in the singular case).

9. and pleas, and do not deliver us into the hand of this son of Belial. And the Living God
9. ותחנונינו⁶⁵ ואל [[מ]] תמסרנו ביד בן בליעל הזה. ואל חי⁶⁶
10. will answer them: My people! Do not fear him, for I will not deliver you
10. יענה להם עמי אל תיראו ממנו שאיני! א מסור אתכם
11. into the hand of this son of Belial. Go to him and say to him: Resurrect for us
11. ביד בן בליעל הזה לכו אליו ואמרו לו החיה לנו את
12. the dead. Immediately go that righteous Ephraimite, together with the righteous of Israel,
12. המתים מיד [הולכים] א[ו] תו הצדיק בן אפרים וצדיקי יש[ראל] עמו
13. say to him: Resurrect the dead for us. He immediately becomes angry at
13. ויאמרו לו החיה לנו את המתים מיד הוא כועס על
14. the righteous Ephraimite, kills him, and burns him in fire. Then the people of Israel
14. הצדיק בן אפרים ויהרגו וישרפו באש. ובני יש[ראל]
15. will flee to the wilderness, put ashes on their heads, rend their garments,
15. ינוסו למד[בר] ויתנו על ראש[ם] הם אפר ויקרעו את בגדיהם
16. and weep in the wilderness of Judah for 40 days and 40 nights, weeping upon weeping,
16. ויבכו במדבר יהודה מ' יום ומ' לילה בכייה על בכייה
17. wailing upon wailing, the weeping of the righteous and the weeping of the wicked:
17. ויללה על לילה [[בכי]] בכיית צדיקים ובכיית רשעים:
18. And the Living God will bring down food for them from the heavens, and a spring
18. ואל חי יוריד להם מאכל מן השמ[ים] ומבוע
19. of water will go forth from beneath the Sanctuary, and they will drink. And for them a month will be like a week,
19. מים מתחת היכל יצא וישתו ויהיה על<י>הם חדש כשבת

⁶⁵ The entire prayer here is linked to the confession and petition in Dan 9:4–19.

⁶⁶ This is a poetic name that originates in Scripture (e.g., Ps 42:4) and often appears in poetry and liturgy. It reappears here on lines 18 and 20 as well as line 3 on 3b [AM].

20. a week like a day, and a day like an hour: And the Living God will remember Israel
 20. ושבת כיום יהיה ויום כשעה: ויזכור אל חי את יש' [ראל]
21. and redeem them from the hand of the enemy. The Holy One, blessed be He, will give permission to Messiah
 21. ויוש<י>עם [[א']] מידי אויב ויתן ה'ק'ב'ה רשות למשיח בן
22. ben Joseph so that he may go out and fight with them. He will kill the son of Belial, the son of the Female Figure,
 22. (יו)ס<ס>ף ויצא וילחם עמם ויהרג את בן בלעל בן הצלמה
23. and all those nations will gather together and come upon Israel until their roots are
 23. ואת כל הגוים ההם יתקבצו ויבואו על יש' [ראל] עד שיעקר
24. uprooted from the land. And those who remain, who did not gather
 24. את שרשם מארץ [[והנר]] הנשארים אשר לא יתקבצו
25. and did not come against Israel will struggle with one another until
 25. ולא יבואו לפני יש' [ראל] הם [[יתגב]] יתגרו אילו עם אילו⁶⁷ עד
- [3b] [ב3]
1. they destroy each other, as it written: “Nation was crushed by nation and city by city,
 1. שישמיד זה את זה שנא' [מר] וכתתו גוי בגוי ועיר בעיר
2. for God stirred them to panic with every kind of trouble.” And the Living God will remember
 2. כי אלהים הממם בכל צרה:⁶⁸ ואל חי יזכור את
3. Israel, and a great darkness will come upon those who remain of the nations that will fall by the sword
 3. יש' [ראל] וחשך גדול יבוא על הנותרים מן העמים שיפלו בחרב

⁶⁷ Compare: “And I will put discord between the nations and a great hatred between Edom and Ishmael so that they struggle with one another and do not annihilate My people Israel” (Chaim M. Horowitz, “Aggadat Rabbi Ishmael,” *Bet 'Eqed ha-Aggadot* (1881): 59–60).

⁶⁸ 2 Chron 15:6.

4. and He will shine a light upon Israel as He did for them in Egypt. And the Holy One, blessed be He, 4. וזריח ליש' [ראל] אור כשעשה⁶⁹ להם במצרים והקב"ה משמים
5. will watch over them from the heavens and have mercy on them; He will stand on the Mount of Olives 5. ישקיף על>י>הם וירחם על>י>הם ויעמוד על הר הזיתים ויבקע
6. and the mountain will split in dread of Him. And the scion of Jesse will be on His right and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel 6. ההר מאימתו⁷⁰ וגזע יש(ע)[י] מימינו⁷¹ וזרובבל בן שאלתיאל
7. to His left, and Elijah the Prophet with them. And the son of Jesse will burn all the wicked ones 7. משמאלו ואליה הנביא עמהם ובן ישי ישרוף את כל הרש[עים]
8. with the breath of his lips, and he will cast their carcass to the earth, where the fowl of the sky will eat them, 8. ברוח שפתיו⁷² ויפ(ו)[י] ל את נבלתם בארץ ויאכלם עוף השמים
9. as will the beast of the earth. And for seven years the Israelites will not need wood for kindling 9. וחיית הארץ ובני יש[ראל] שבע שנים אינן צריכין עצים להסיק
10. in their woodpiles, for they will burn stakes of broom shrubs from the peoples: 10. מעריכ>י>הם ושורפים יתידות של רתמים משל עממים⁷³:
11. And Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, will blow a great shofar and gather 11. וזרובבל בן שאלתיאל יתקע בשופר גדול ויקבץ
12. all of My people, Israel, from the four corners of the earth. And the son of Jesse will wake 12. כל [[א]] עמי יש[ראל] מ>א>רבע כנפות הארץ ויע>ו>דרר בן ישי את
13. those who dwell in the dust. They will go forth from beneath the Mount of Olives, the righteous among them 13. שוכני עפר ויצא מתחת הר הז[יתים] וצדיקים שבהם

⁶⁹ This (כשעשה) is a medieval Hebrew usage [AM].

⁷⁰ Based on Zech 14:4.

⁷¹ Based on Ps 110:1, 5.

⁷² Based on Isa 11:4, the description of the “shoot from the stump of Jesse.”

⁷³ Based on Ezek 39:9; see below ch. 5.1.

14. carried on wings of eagles, and the remaining saints 14. נשואים על כנפי נשרים והנשאים הקדושים
15. on the clouds of heaven: And the Living God will lower Jerusalem. 15. על ענני שמים: ואל חי יוריד את ירוש' [לים]
16. And God will lower Jerusalem, already built, from heaven, with chain of iron, 16. ואל יוריד את ירדש' [לים] כשהיא בנויה מן הש' [מים] בשלשל של ברזל
17. and He will set it upon four [mountains]: Tabor, Carmel, Hermon, and the Mount 17. [[ויעמ]] ויעמידה על ארבעה תיבור [[!]] וכרמל וחרמון [[מזר יז]] והר
18. of Olives: [And the heavens] and the earth will be renewed, and they will build Jerusalem with precious stones 18. הזיתים⁷⁴: [והשמים] והארץ יתחדשו⁷⁵ ויבנו את ירושכל ים באבנים טובות
19. and gems, and they will bring Israel up [to Jerusalem] with acclaim, rejoicing, song, and praise: 19. ומרגליות ויעלו את יש' [ראל] בהלל ורנה ושיר ושבח:
20. And Abraham will sit on the right [of the son of Jesse], and Moses will sit to the left, 20. ואברהם יושב על יד ימין⁷⁶ ומשה יושב (ע)כל השמאל
21. and they will all enter Jerusalem joyfully, and they will say to Moses: Look! This 21. וכולם נכנסים לירוש' [לים] ברינה ויאמרו למשה ר' [אה] זה
22. is your people, the flock you pastured! And Abraham and Moses will walk before you, 22. הוא עמך [[וצו]] וצאן מרעיתך ואברהם ומשה ילכו לפניכם
23. and the Living God will bring down the manna for them, as of yore: Death will be swallowed up 23. ואל חי יוריד לה(מ) <ם> את המן כברא שונה: ויבלע המות
24. forever. And Messiah ben David will arise after all the wars of Messiah 24. לנ<י>צח! [[!]] ויעמד משיח בן דוד אחר כ<ל> מלחמת משיח

⁷⁴ See below, 136–140.

⁷⁵ Based on Isa 65:17 and 66:22. See also Revelation 21.

⁷⁶ This is a distinctive linguistic usage [AM].

25. Ben Joseph; he will appear as a king, and he will draw out the Leviathan with a hook and raise it
ויעלהו בן יוסף וידמה למלך וימשך את לויתן בחכה

[4a]

[א4]

1. from the sea. And the Behemoths that he pastures on a thousand mountains, Messiah will slaughter
1. מן הים ולבהמות שהוא רועה באלף הרים
[[מ']] וישחטם

2. all three of them severely (?). And they will eat and rejoice a great joy,
2. משיח לשלשתם⁷⁷ קשות[?] והם יאכלו
>ו<שמחו שמחה

3. unlike any other that has been made from the day the world was created
3. גדולה אשר לא נעשה מיום שניברא העולם

4. until this day. They will bow and give praise to their Creator with thanks,
4. ועד היום הזה וישתחוו וישבחו לבוראם
בהודאות

5. with songs, and with ecstasy. High priests and Levites will sing,
5. ובשׁוֹמְרֵי יְהוָה ובעלוצׁוֹת וכהנים גדולים ולוים
ישוררו

6. Aaron the high priest and the priests will offer sacrifices and slaughter them,
6. [[מ']] ואהרן הכהן וכהנים יקרׁוֹב וקרבנות וישחטו

7. for all time (?): And I, Daniel, upon hearing these words,
7. לעׁוֹלָם: [ולם?]

8. rejoiced greatly; I honored, extolled, and praised
8. האלה שמחתי שמׁ[חה] גדולה ורוממתי
וגדלתי ושבחתי

9. the Supreme King of kings, and I said to the angel: When will these visions
9. לפני מלך מׁ[לכי] המׁ[לכים]⁷⁸ ואמרתי
למׁ[לאד] עד מתי החזיונות

10. [be fulfilled]? He told me: Lie with your forefathers and arise to accept your fate
10. האלה אמר לי שכב אׁ[תה] עם אבותיך
עמד לגורלך

11. at the end of days. Thereupon Jeremiah and Elijah and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, came to me
11. לקץ [[מ']] הימים⁷⁹ ובא אלי ירמיהו ואליהו
וזרובבל בן

⁷⁷ The third is Ziz. Based on Leviticus Rabbah 13:3; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 197.

⁷⁸ “Supreme King of kings” (מלך מלכי המלכים) is a Rabbinic Hebrew usage [AM].

⁷⁹ Based on Dan 12:13, the final verse of the book of Daniel.

12. and said: Write down this vision. I revealed it to Ezra
12. שאלתיאל ואמרו כתוב החזיון הזה גליתי לעזרא
13. the Scribe, and it uplifted me; and I revealed the redemption of Israel, and about the scion,
13. [[מ]] [[ה]] הסופר ותרוממני וגליתי ישועת יש' [ראל] ועל הצמח
14. the son of [Jesse], so that [Ezra] reveals these secrets to the sages, for it will remain hidden until
14. בן [יש]י⁸⁰ שיגילנו הרוזים האילן⁸¹ לחכמים שהוא גנוזה עד
15. the time of Israel's salvation. Write ten and sealed.
15. עת קץ ישועת יש' [ראל] כתובים וחתומים:
16. End
16. תמת⁸²

1.4 Side-by-Side Topical Translation

1. Signs of Redemption: The Historical Chapter The Umayyad Caliphs

1. X. Sulaymān.
A great commotion will be in the East and in the West,
and the king of Babylon will reign
and be a head to the sages,
and the king of the West will die in his days.
His reign will last for 10 years:
1 י' סולימאן
מהומה גדולה תהיה במז(ח) [ר]ח
ובמערב
וימלוך מלך בבל
ויהיה ראש לחכמ'
וימת מלך מערב בימיו
מלכותו י' שנים:
2. XI. 'Umar.
In his days will be peace in the world
and serenity among people.
And he will reign 3 years:
2 י"א עומר
בימיו יהיה שלום בעולם
ושלוה יהיה לבני אדם
ומ' [לך] ג' שנים:

⁸⁰ The consecutive words ישי שיגילנו apparently caused the erasure of the first word.

⁸¹ The phrase שיגילנו הרוזים reflects Rabbinic Hebrew usage [AM].

⁸² End (of the Vision) תַּמַּת.

3. XII. Yazīd.

A wolf of the desert he will be,
robbing people,
and then he will die;
he will reign 8 years and 2 months.

3 י"ב [י] ב יזיד
זאב ערבו[ת] יהיה
וחומס את בני אדם
ואחר כך ימות
ומלך ח' שנה וב' חדשים:

The Early 'Abbāsid Caliphs

4. [a] XIII. Then will reign Abū Dja'far.

A great sage with strong opinions he will be;
like a wolf, he robs
and hoards much gold and silver,
leaving nothing for people
who seek bread and find none
for he will leave nothing in their hands;
they will offer animals for sale but there will
be no buyer, for lack of money;
he will bury treasures in hiding places;
And he will be revealed to the Ishmaelites in
their salvation.
He will be a great sage, a reader of books.
He will go to pray at the temple of his
mistake[n religion] and die on the way.
And his reign will be 22 years,
whereupon he will give away his ring
so that it will not be left in the hands of the
members of his house

4.1 י"ג ואחריו מ' [ולך] אבוגעפר

חכם גדול בעל דעה יהיה
ודומה לזא(י)ב חומס
וקובץ זהב וכסף הרבה
ולא יותיר לבני אדם
ומבקשים לחם ואין
בעבור שלא יותיר בידם מאומה
ובהמה ימכרו ואין איש קונה אתו
ומ(כ)[ב] לי כסף [[וח]]
ויטמון מטמונית
והוא נגלה לבני יש[מעאל] בישועתם
וחכם גדול יהיה
וקורא ספרים
והולך להתפלל בבית טעו(נ)תו
וימת בדרך
ומלכותו כ"ב שנים
ואחר כך נותן טבעתו
שלא יעזב בידיהם לבני ביתו

[b] XVII [XIV?]

and those who remain seek, but there is
nothing,
for he will leave nothing in their hands;
they will offer animals for sale, but there
will be no buyer, for lack of money in their
hands.
He will hoard silver and gold
and bury it in hiding places;
and in the future it will be revealed to
people in their salvation
and he will be a great sage and a reader of
books,

4.2 י"ז [ד?] [?]

והנשארים מבקשים ואין

בעבור שלא יעזב בידיהם מאומה
ובהמה (ו)[י]מכר ואין מי שיקנה
מ(כ)[ב] לי כסף בידם

ומקבץ כסף וזהב
ויטמון במטמ(י)[ו]נית
והוא לעתיד שיגלה לבני אדם בישועתם
וחכם גדול יהיה וקורא ספרים יהיה
וישאל וידרוש ויבקש חכמה

- and he will ask and seek and demand wisdom;
and he will go to celebrate at the temple of
his mistake[n religion] and die on the way
And his reign will be 22 years,
whereupon he will give his ring to the mem-
bers of his household.
- וילך לחוג בבית טעותו
וימת בדרך
ומלכותו כ"ב שנה
ואחר כן יתן טבעתו לבני ביתו.
5. After him will reign [XIV] Mahdī his son.
He will be wise,
and a lover of harlotry he will be;
he will profligately spend silver and gold in
the world.
There will be peace,
and falsehood will proliferate in the world.
He will go to the land of the East
and die there,
and his reign will last 10 years:
- 5 וימלך אחריו מהדי בנ(י)[ו]
חכם יהיה
ואהב זנות יהיה
וכסף וזהב יפזר בעו>לם
ושלום יהיה
ושקר ירבה בעולם
וילך לארץ מזרח
וימת שם
ומלכותו עשר שנים:
6. [XV] And after him will reign Musa, his
youngest son;
he will be fluid of mind
and his desire will be to destroy the world.
His reign will be one year and five days.
- 6 וימלוך אחר' [יו] מ>ו< סי בנ(י)[ו]
(ש)[צ] עיר ושטוף בדעתו יהיה
ורצונו לאבד את העולם
ומלכותו שנה אחת וחמש[ה'] ימים
7. [a] [XVI] And after him will reign Hārūn his
son;
he will be a roaring lion
and a harsh judge
who upholds his designs
and kills all the officers of the land and the
sons of
Ishmael; his desire will be to destroy the
world in its
entirety, and all his days he will shed blood.
He will judge with truth,
and he will rove and wander
from East to West and from West to East:
And he will capture cities and towns from
the King of
Edom and take a great many captives from
them,
And he will return to his place in peace.
- 7.1 וימלוך אחריו הארון בנו
ארי שואג יהיה
<ובעל-דין> קשה יהיה
ו[מ] קים עצתו
והורג כל קציני ארץ ובני יש[מעאל]
ורצונו לאבד את כל העולם כלו
[[כל]] וכל ימיו ישפוך דמים
ובעל דין אמת
ונע ונד יהיה
מן המזרח למ' [ערב] ומן מע' [רב]
למזרח:
וילכוד מדינות ועיירות מן מלך
אד>ו<ם
ולוקח מהם שבי גדול
ויחזו>ו<ר למקומו בשלום.

- [b] And a man from the East will rise against him
and stir up the whole world against him all day long.
He will shed blood, but not by his own deed[?]. He will call them heretics and pursue the people of the East but not overtake them.
He will divide his kingdom in his lifetime among his three sons: Muḥammad in Babylon, the West to Kāsīm and the East to Ma'mūn:
And he will die in exile,
and his reign will be 23 years:
- 7.2 [[ול]] ויעמד עליו איש ממזכר-ח ויהם את העולם כלו עליו כל היום וישפוך דמים ולא בעבו/רתו וקורא אותם כופרים וירדוף את בני מזרח ולא ישגם ויחלק את מלכותו בחייו לשלשת בניו: למ[[א]]>ח<מד מבבל ולקאסם מערבי למאמין מזרח: וימת בגולה וימלכותו כ"ג שנים:
8. After him will reign [XVII] Muḥammad his son;
he will be wicked in deed
but generous,
and in his day everybody will earn a living.
And in his day tumult and sword will dwell among brothers,
and his brother will send against him a great general.
He and his sons and brothers will abuse each other and both will kill many soldiers:
His spurned brother will come to the country of Babylon
and wage war with him. He will kill his brother,
loot much, and plunder his treasures.
His reign will be 4 years and 6 months.
- 8 וימ' [לוד] אחר' [יו] מחמד בנו מעשיו רעים ורחב לב יהיה והכל ימצאו בימיו פרנס[ה] ובימיו תפ(י)[ו]ל בין אחים מה<ו>מה גדולה וחרב וישלח אחיו עליו שר גדול הוא ובניו ואחים [[יע]] י[ת]עמרו זה את[!] זה ויהרגו שניהם חיילים הרבה: ויבוא אחי(ב)[ו] המודה למדינת בבל: ו>י<עש מלחמה עמו ויהרג את אחיו וישלל הרבה ויבז מאצרתיו וימלכותו ד' שנים וששה חדשים
9. [a] [XVIII] After him, his brother will reign in his place:
- 9.1 (וימלוד אח(ר)ו במקומו)
- [b] And after him will reign an officer from his family, Muḥammad by name,
and people will change his name.
- 9.2 וימ' [לוד] אחר' [יו] קצין ממשפחתו מחמד שמו וישנה[!] בני אדם את שמו

God will bring success to his kingdom,
and his enemies will be given in his hands;
he will strike and stir up Hindustan [?],
and they will bring him much money from
everywhere.

And the land will be desolate,
and he will die.

In his life he will change many things in his
kingdom,
and he will love building; all his days he will
be involved in building:

ויולי מצליח במלכותו
ונמ>ס>רו אויביו בידו
והוא יכ(ו)[ה] ויהם את הנדוס תאן [?]
וממון הרבה יביאו לו מכל מקומ' [ות]

ותהיה הארץ שממה
וימות.

ובחיייו ישנה דברים הרבה במלכותו
וא>ו>הב בנן יהיה וכל [[ימ]] ימיו
יעש בבנין:

The "Vague List" of the Kings of Ishmael

10. [a] After him another king from the East will
come with a large force and will reach the
country of Babylon. He will capture it and
shed much blood.

And from there he will go to the West,
and against him will stand the He-Goat
whose name is Zāfīni/Zūfyani and they will
both do battle,
And he will kill the He-Goat,
and the Easterner will come to Egypt, and
lay it waste.

He will shed an inestimable amount of blood
therein.

And he will turn back and come to Damas-
cus and shed blood in it like water.

- [b] Then the sons of Fāṭima will crown
5 kings:

[c] The name of the most senior among them
is [XX] Mahdī, and his reign will be 3 years.
In their days, there will be sword, pestilence,
and famine: and they will be erased and
pass from the world as though they never
were:

10.1 ואחריו יבוא מלך אחר מן
המזרח בחיל גדול
ויגיע למדינת בבל וילכוד וישפוך בה
דמים הרבה
ומשם ילך למערב
ויציא[!] לקראתו צפיר עזים ששמו
צפיני
[[וילמו]] וילחמו שניהם
ויהרג את צפ(ו)[י]ר העזים
ויגיע המזרחי למצרים ושם אותה
שממה
ודם הרבה ויבוא לדמשק וישפוך בה
דמים כמים.

- 10.2 ואחר כן ימליכו בני פא>ט>מה
ה' מלכים

10.3 שם הגדול אשר בהם מהדי
ומלכות שלו ג' שנה יהיה
ובימי>ה>ם חרב ודבר ו>ר>עב יהיה:
ויכלו ויעברו וישמדו מן העולם והיו
כלא ה>ו>:

2. Messianic Birth Pangs

The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Camp of his Enemies: The Northerners and Gog and Magog

Transitional section, from the slaughter of the Ishmaelites to their flight to the desert

- 1 After all of these, the Daughter of Levi will become pregnant and give birth to a son; his stature will be fifteen cubits higher than the mountains;
the Ishmaelites will be killed beforehand, and those who remain will flee to the wilderness of Paran.
- 1 ואחר כל אלה תהר בת לוי ותלד בן קומתו גבוה למעלה ההרים חמש עשרה אמה(ת)[ה]
ובני ישמע' [אל] נהרגים קודם שיצא והנותרים ב>ו<רחים למדבר פארן

The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Northerners besiege Babylon, despoiling, and the flight of the residents

- 2 The Son of the Daughter of Levi will grow stronger, and all the Northerners along with him. And he will pitch his tent from East to West, which is the country of Babylon. In it they will kill three thousand and a thousand until the waters of the Tigris become dried and turn to blood. Those who come or go will have no respite from the drawn sword, looting, and much plundering: The living will say to the dead, Fortunate are you for you are in graves. And the Son of the Daughter of Levi will go forth with a large army, and everyone who sees him will flee from before him.
- 2 ובן בת לוי מתגבר וכל בני צפון עמו ויטע[!] אהלו מן (מערב) [מזרח] למערב והיא מדינת בבל ויהרגו בה שלשת אלפים [ו]אלף [[עד]] עד [[שי]] שיבישו מי חדקל ו>י<הפכו לדם וליוצא ולב(ו)א אין שלום מן חרב שלופה ובוזה ושלל רב: החיים אומ' [רים] למתים אשריכם שאתם בקברות ובן בת לוי יצא [[מ']] בחיל גדול וכל מי שרואין אתו ינוסו מפניו

The fearsome appearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi

- 3 And he will have many signs: He will be a hundred cubits tall and ten cubits wide; the length of his nose will be one cubit.
- 3 ויהיה מ' [ספר] אותותיו הרבה: וארכו מאה אמות יהיה ורחבו עשר אמות יהיה ארך חטמו אמה [[אחד]] אחת יהיה

His hair will be long and blond:
 His eyes will be small,
 his teeth long,
 his beard long, his beard three cubits long.
 Woe and misery betides all the people of the
 world from him and from dread of him.
 The whole world will say that he is Mes-
 siah, but he will not be: And with him will
 be all Northerners, and the Easterners and
 Westerners as well, except for the Southern-
 ers, who will flee from him; and a remnant
 of the Ishmaelites will flee with them, and
 survivors of the sword along with them. And
 he will spread his net
 over all the inhabitants of the earth:

שערו ארוך וצהוב יהיה:
 עיניו קטנות
 [[ש]] שיניו ארוכות
 זקנו ארוכות [!] זקנו ג' אמה יהיה
 אוי וי [אבו] לכל באי העולם
 ממנו ומן אימתו
 כל העולם כולו יאמרו משי' [ח] הוא
 ולא יהיה:
 ועמו כל בני צפון ובני מז' [רח] ובני
 מער' [ב] עמו
 לבד מן בני ת' <י' מן שינוסו מפניו
 וגם שריד בני ישמעאל ינוסו עמהם
 ושרידי (ם) חרב עמהם
 [[ויס]] ויפרוש מכמרתו
 על כל יושבי הארץ:

Gog and Magog join his camp

4. Then Gog and Magog will hear
 and come to meet him;
 their signs are: each of them has four eyes,
 two in front of them and two behind them,
 and they pressure the whole world.

4 אז ישמעו גוג ומגוג
 ויבואו לקראתו
 ואות (י) [תיהם ארבע עינים לכל
 א' [חד] ואחד מהם
 שתיים מלפניהם וש' [תיים] מאחריהם
 ולוחצים את כל העולם כולו

The persecution of Israel, destruction of enemies, and salvation of Israel by God

5. He chases Israel to destroy them,
 but the Holy One, blessed be He, will save
 them;
 and He will fight them and destroy them:

5 ורודף אחרי יש' [ראל] לכלותם
 וה' ק'ב'ה יצילם
 והוא ילחם בם וישמידם:

Daniel's Fear and the Angel's Interpretation (transitional section or a remnant from the concatenation of different parts of the Vision)

6. And I, Daniel, upon hearing these words
 from the mouth of the angel,
 I shuddered, I spoke rashly
 and said to the angel of God:
 What will be with my children, my people?
 He told me: Daniel incline your ear,

6 ואני דניאל [[בש']] בשמעי את
 [[את]] הדברים האלה מפי המלאך
 ונדדעז' [תי] ונבהלתי על פני
 ואמרתי למ' <ל' אד' יו' י'
 מה יהיה א' [ת] בני א' [ת] עמי

open your eyes, and understand all that I
speak to you,
and all the words
I have said to you are truth.

אמר לי דניאל הטה אינך
פקח עיניך והבן לכל אשר אני דבר
אל כל הדברים
אשר [[אמ']] אמרתי אליך אמת הוא:

Armilus, Son of the Female Figure, and his Camp

Armilus and the Son of the Daughter of Levi

7. And I further tell you that you that the off-
spring
of the Female Figure
will join with the Son of the Daughter of Levi;
his name is Armilus, a son of Belial,
bleary-eyed.
He will also speak riddles.

7 [[ויעד]] ועוד אני מגיד לך שיבוא
יליד(ה) [ה]צלמה
ויתחבר עם בן בת לוי
ושמו ארמלוס בן בליעל
עיניו טרופות
וגם הוא יגיד [[חי]] חידות

Armilus's camp

8. They will gather to him—all the wicked men
and sons
of Belial and a ruthless nation of spillers of
blood
who permit their wives to one another.

8 ויתקבצו עליו כל אנשי הרשעה ובני
בליעל וגוי עז פנים ושפכי דמים
ומתיר(א)ים את נשותיהן אילו לאילו

Armilus claims to be the messiah and performs wonders for the faithful

9. They will say that serving him is greater
than serving any of the peoples.
They will go to him, to the West,
and believe in him and tell him: You are
Messiah.
He then calls for fish from the sea, and they
emerge
and are given to him; he calls for the beast
of the field and the bird of the sky and they
come to him.
They take them and slaughter them.

9 והן אומ'[[רים]] שעבודתו גדולה
מעבודת כל העמ'ים
והולכין אצלן למערב
ומאמינן בו ואומרין לו שאתה הוא
משיח
וק'רא לדגים מן הים וע'ו-לים
נמסרים לו
וקורא לחית השדה ולעוף השמים
ובאים אצלו
ולקחום א'ו-תם וש'ו-חתים[!]
אותם.

His messiahship is accepted

10. And many of your people will follow him, believing in him and not believing in the covenant of our God.
- 10 ורבים מבני עמך ה' > לכים אחריו ומאמ' > י' > נים בו וא' > י' > נם מא' [מינים] בברית אלהינו

Armilus and his camp in the holy place (Jerusalem?)

11. And people from among the children of Israel, who who believe in our God's covenant join. And He will take them—one per town and two per family—and lead them to the Holy Place.
- 11 ואנשים מבני יש' [ראל] אשר הם מאמ' > י' > נים בברית אלה' > י' > נם מתחברים ויקח אותם [אחד] מעיר ושנים ממשפחה ומוליכם למ' [קום] הקדש

Armilus, the Righteous Man of Ephraim [Messiah ben Joseph?] and his Camp: The First Encounter

The direct challenge to Armilus's messiahship

12. And the living God will send a righteous man from the children of Ephraim, who will go and gather the sages of Israel and bring them to Armilus the Edomite, the wicked son of Belial, and they will ask him: Are you Messiah? And he will say to them: I am Messiah, and I am your king and your redeemer.
- 12 ואל חי ישלח צדיק מן בני אפרים והולך ויקבץ את חכמי יש' [ראל] ויביאם אל ארמילוס האדומי בן בליעל הרשעה ושואלים אותו וא' > י' > נם מ' [רים] לו הא' [ם] אתה משיח ואומ' [ר] להם אני משיח ואני הוא מלכם ומשיעכם

Signs of his messiahship: The Staff of Moses and Jar of Manna

13. They will say to him: We ask for three signs from you. If you tell us, we believe you that you are Messiah. He will say to them: What are the signs that you ask? And they will say: The Staff of Moses, son of Amram,
- 13 ואומ' [רים] לו ג' אותות שואלין ממך אם אתה מגיד לנו אנחנו מאמינים בך שאתה משיח והוא יאמר להם מהו אותות שאתם מבקשים והם יאמרו מטה משה בן עמרם

with which he performed signs in Egypt and	שע>ש-ה בה [!] אותות במ' [צרים]
turned	והפך
the rivers to blood.	[[יאור]] יאורים לדם
And he will bring them a staff that resem-	והוא יביא להם מטה כדמות מטה
bles the Staff of Moses and it will bud flower	משה
and yield almonds.	ויוציא פרח ויוציאה [!] שקדים.
And they will also tell him: Bring us the Jar	ועוד יאמ' [רן] לו הביא לנו צלוחית
of Manna,	שלמן
and he will bring it to them.	ויביא להם.

The Response to Armilus's Messiah Claims by the Righteous Man of Ephraim and his Jewish Followers: First Flight to the Wilderness

Prayer and Lament

14. And so will do the righteous Ephraimite and	14 וכן יע>ש-ה צדיק בן אפרים
the sages	וחכמי יש' [ראל] שיהיו עמו
of Israel who will be with him:	וילכו למדבר וילבשו שקים
They will go to the desert and wear sack-	וי>ו>שבים על האפר
cloth	וילב' [י] שו את ספר ת>ו>רה שק
and sit on the ashes	ויוזקו על רא' [שם] עפר
and dress the Torah scroll in sackcloth	וי>ב>וואו ויבכו בקול גדול.
and sprinkle dust on their heads	ויאמר [ו] אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
and they will come and weep in a loud voice	א' [להי] אבר' [הם] א' [להי] יצחק
and say: Our God, God of our fathers,	וא' [להי] יעקב
God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of	אל תפן אל קשיינו ואל רש' [עינו] ואל
Jacob:	חטא' [תינו]
Overlook our stubbornness, our wickedness,	ורחם עלינו ושם' [ע] תפלותינו
and our sins; and have mercy on us, and	וצעק' [תנו] ותחנונו
hear our prayers and cries and pleas,	ואל [[מ]] תמסרנו ביד בן בליעל הזה.
and do not deliver us into the hand of this	
son of Belial.	

God's response, promise for the future, and counsel for dealing with Armilus—resurrection

15. And the Living God will answer them:	5.2 ואל חי יענה להם
My people! Do not fear him, for I will not	עמי אל תיראו ממנו
deliver you	שאיני' [!] אמסור אתכם ביד בן בליעל
into the hand of this son of Belial. Go to him	הזה
and say to him: Resurrect for us the dead.	לכו אליו ואמרו לו החיה לנו את
	המתים

Armilus, Messiah ben Joseph, and his Camp: Second Encounter

The request that he resurrect the dead, and Armilus's reaction—killing Messiah ben Joseph

16. Immediately, that righteous Ephraimite, together with the righteous of Israel, say to him: Resurrect the dead for us. He immediately becomes angry at the righteous Ephraimite, kills him, and burns him in fire.
- 16 מיד [הולכים] א[ו]תו הצדיק בן אפרים וצדיקי יש' [ראל] עמו ויאמרו לו החיה לנו את המתים מיד הוא כועס על הצדיק בן אפרים ויהרגו וישרפו באש.

The Response of the Faithful to the Killing of Messiah ben Joseph: the Second Flight to the Wilderness

Lament and prayer

17. Then the people of Israel will flee to the wilderness, put ashes on their heads, rend their garments, and weep in the wilderness of Judah for 40 days and 40 nights, weeping upon weeping, wailing upon wailing, the weeping of the righteous and the weeping of the wicked:
- 17 ובני יש' [ראל] ינוסו למד' [בר] ויתנו על ראש[י]הם אפר ויקרעו את בגדיהם ויבכו במדבר יהודה מ' יום ומ' לילה בכייה על בכייה ויללה על לילה [[בכי]] בכיית צדיקים ובכיית רשעים:

God's providence for the faithful who fled—the miracle of food and drink

18. And the Living God will bring down food for them from the heavens, and a spring of water will go forth from beneath the Sanctuary, and they will drink.
- 18 ואל חי יוריד להם מאכל מן השמ[ים] ומבוע מים מתחת היכל יצא וישתו

The miracle of flexible time—shortened time periods in advance of the redemption

19. And for them a month will be like a week, a week like a day, and a day like an hour:
- 19 יהיה על>הם חדש כשבת ושבת כיום יהיה ויום כשעה:

3. The Redemption

The Destruction of Remaining Enemies

Messiah ben Joseph fights Armilus and his camp

1. And the Living God will remember Israel and redeem them from the hand of the enemy. The Holy One, blessed be He, will give permission to Messiah ben Joseph, so that he may go out and fight with them. He will kill the son of Belial, the son of the Female Figure, and all those nations will gather together and come upon Israel until their roots are uprooted from the land.

1 ויזכור אל חי את יש' [ראל]
ויוש<י>עם [[א']] מידי אויב
ויתן ה'ק'ב'ה רשות למשיח בן
יו(ס)<ס>ף
ויצא וילחם עמם
ויהרג את בן בליעל בן הצלמה
ואת כל הגוים ההם יתקבצו ויבואו על
יש' [ראל]
עד שיעקר את שרשם מארץ

The remaining enemies destroy one another

2. And those who remain, who did not gather and did not come against Israel will struggle with one another until they destroy each other, as it written: "Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God stirred them to panic with every kind of trouble:"
3. And the Living God will remember Israel, and a great darkness will come upon those who remain of the nations that will fall by the sword, and He will shine a light upon Israel as He did for them in Egypt.

2 [[והנר]] הנשארים אשר לא יתק-
בצו ולא יבואו לפני יש' [ראל]
הם [[יתגב]] יתגרו אילו עם אילו עד
שישמיד זה את זה
שנא' [מר] וכתתו גוי בגוי ועיר בעיר
כי אלהים הממם בכל צרה:

3 ואל חי יזכור את יש' [ראל]
וחשך גדול יבוא על הנותרים מן
העמים שיפלו בחרב
ויוזרח ליש' [ראל] אור כשעשה להם
במצרים

Zerubbabel and Messiah ben David

The Splitting of the Mount of Olives and the appearance of the rescuers:

Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and Elijah

4. And the Holy One, blessed be He, will watch over them from the heavens and have mercy on them;

4 והקב"ה משמים
ישקיף על>י>הם
וירחם על>י>הם

He will stand on the Mount of Olives
and the mountain will split in dread of Him.
And the scion of Jesse will be on His right
and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, to His left,
and Elijah the Prophet with them.

ויעמוד על הר הזתים
ויבקע ההר מאימתו
וגזע יש(ע)[י] מימינו
וזרובבל בן שאלתיאל משמאלו
ואליה הנביא עמהם.

Messiah ben David incinerates the enemies

5. And the son of Jesse will
burn all the wicked ones with the breath of
his lips,
and he will cast their carcass to the earth,
where the fowl of the sky will eat them, as
will the beast of the earth. And for seven
years the Israelites will not need wood for
kindling in their woodpiles, for they will burn
stakes of broom shrubs from the peoples:

5 ובן ישי
ישרוף את כל הרש[עים] ברוח שפתיו
ויפ(ו)[י] את נבלתם בארץ
ויאכלם עוף השמים וחיית הארץ
ובני יש[ראל] שבע שנים אינן צריכין
עצים להסיק מעריכ<י> הם
ושורפים יתידות של רתמים משל
עממים:

Healing the People and Repairing the World

Gathering of exiles and resurrection of the dead

6. And Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel,
will blow a great shofar
and gather all of My people, Israel, from the
four corners of the earth. And the son of
Jesse will wake those who dwell in the dust.
They will go forth from beneath the Mount
of Olives,
the righteous among them carried on wings
of eagles,
and the remaining saints on the clouds of
heaven:

6 וזו<ו> בבל בן שאלתיאל
יתקע בשופר גדול
ויקבץ כל [[א]] עמי יש[ראל]
מ<א> רבע כנפות הארץ
ויע<ו> רר בן ישי את שוכני עפר
ויצא[ו] מתחת הר הז[יתים]
וצדיקים שבהם נשואים על כנפי
נשרים
והנשואים הקדושים על ענני שמים:

The rebuilt Jerusalem descends

7. And the Living God will lower Jerusalem.
And God will lower Jerusalem, already built,
from heaven, with chains of iron,
and He will set it upon four [mountains]:
Tabor, Carmel, Hermon, and the Mount of
Olives:
[And the heavens] and the earth will be
renewed,

7 ואל חי יור<י> ד את ירוש[לם]
ואל יוריד את י<ו>[שלם] כשהיא
בנויה מן הש[מים] בשלשל של ברזל
[[ויעמ]] ויעמידה על ארבעה
תיבור[!] וכרמל
וחרמון [[מזר יז]] והר הזיתים:
[והשמים] והארץ יתחדשו

and they will build Jerusalem with precious stones and gems, and they will bring Israel up [to Jerusalem] with acclaim, rejoicing, song, and praise:

ויבנו את ירושלים באבנים טובות ומרגליות
ויעלו את ישראל [ראל] בהלל ורנה ושיר ושבח:

The patriarchs, Abraham and Moses, arrive in Jerusalem

8. And Abraham will sit on the right [of the son of Jesse],
and Moses will sit to the left, and they will all enter
Jerusalem joyfully, and they will say to Moses: Look!
This is your people, the flock you pastured!
And Abraham and Moses will walk before you

8 ואברהם יושב על יד ימין ומשה יושב (ע) <ע>ל השמאל וכולם נכנסים לירושל' [לים] ברינה
ויאמרו למשה ר' [אה] זה הוא עמד [[וצו]] וצאן מרעיתך
ואברהם ומשה ילכו לפניכם

The Messianic Era

Eternal life

9. And the Living God will bring down the manna for them, as of yore: Death will be swallowed up forever

9 ואל חי יוריד לה(מ) <ם> את המן כבראשונה:
ויבלע המות לנ<י> צח[!]

The Banquet of the Messiah

10. And Messiah ben David will arise after all the wars of Messiah ben Joseph; he will appear as a king, and he will draw out the Leviathan with a hook and raise it from the sea.
And the Behemoths that he pastures on a thousand mountains, Messiah will slaughter all three of them severely (?). And they will eat and rejoice a great joy,
unlike any other that has been made from the day the world was created until this day. They will bow and give praise to their Creator with thanks, with songs, and with ecstasy.

10 ויעמד משיח בן דוד אחר <ב>ל מלחמת משיח בן יוסף וידמה למלך
וימשך את לויתן בחכה ויעלהו מן הים ולבהמות שהוא רועה באלף הרים [[מ']]
וישחטם משיח לשלשתם קשות[?] והם יאכלו ו>י>שמחו שמחה גדולה אשר לא נעשה מיום שניברא העולם ועד היום הזה
וישתחו וישבחו לבוראם בהודאות ובש<י>רים ובעלוצ<י>ם

The return of the priesthood and Temple service

11. High priests and Levites will sing, וכהנים גדולים ולוים ישוררו
 Aaron the high priest and the priests will [[מ']] ואהרן הכהן והכהנים
 offer sacrifices and slaughter them, for all יקר<בו קרבנות וישחטו לע' [ולם?]:
 time (?):

4. Conclusion of the Vision

Daniel's joy

1. And I, Daniel, upon hearing these words, 1 ואני דניאל בשמעתי את הדברים
 rejoiced greatly; האלה
 I honored, extolled, and praised שמחתי שמ' [חה] גדולה
 the Supreme King of kings, ורוממתי וגדלתי ושבחתי
 לפני מלך מ' [לכי] המ' [לכים]

The angel is revealed

2. And I said to the angel: When will these 2 ואמרתי למ' [לאך] עד מתי החזיונות
 visions [be fulfilled]? He told me: Lie with האלה
 your forefathers אמר לי שכב א' [תה] עם אבותיך
 and arise to accept your fate עמד לגורלך
 at the end of days. לקץ [[מ']] הימים

The charge of Jeremiah, Elijah, and Zerubbabel to write down the Vision

3. Thereupon Jeremiah and Elijah and Zerub- 3 ובא אלי ירמיהו ואליהו וזרובבל בן
 babel, son of Shealtiel, came to me and said: שאלתיאל ואמרו כתוב החזיון הזה
 Write down this vision.

The Vision is revealed to Ezra and Israel

4. I revealed it to Ezra the Scribe, and it 4 גליתי לעזרא [[מ]] הסופר ותרור
 uplifted me; ממני
 and I revealed the redemption of Israel, and וגליתי ישועת יש' [ראל]
 about the ועל הצמח בן [ישי]
 scion, the son of [Jesse], so that [Ezra] שיגילנו הרזים האילו לחכמים
 reveals these secrets to the sages,

The conclusion of the Vision

5. For it will remain hidden until the time of 5 שהוא גנוזה עד עת קץ ישועת
 Israel's salvation. Written and sealed: יש' [ראל] כתובים וחתומים:
 End תמת

2 The Work

The present chapter addresses the contents of the Vision according to the order of the text as it survived, and it is meant to present the work as possessing literary continuity. I have tried to minimize comments and citations of scholarly literature in this chapter, as they appear in the notes to the text itself, and the main scholarly works appear in the more focused discussions of select issues in subsequent chapters.

2.1 Contents and Outline

In its full format, the Vision of Daniel is the product of the combination and edition of works at the author's disposal, which were based on ancient traditions of exegesis and visions concerning the end of days⁸³. These traditions were written down in various eras and in several stages. We can suggest discerning three stages in the editing of the work: the first stage, in the first half of the eighth century; the second stage, in the 840s; and the third stage, in the 990s. The main part of the work was completed during its **second** editorial stage, and the additions made 150 years later are negligible. The era of composition is attested by the signs of editorial activity at the seams joining the various traditions. These signs will be discussed below (ch. 3.3.2). We cannot determine whether all the editorial work was done by the author of the later Vision, but it stands to reason that some of it was done at earlier stages. The most suitable stage for the detailed editing was the second stage, and the later author only joined together works that had been authored before his time. The fact that the beginning of the Vision is missing from the surviving text also contributes to the difficulty in determining when the complete work was edited and what its secondary components are.

The missing parts of the Vision of Daniel can be reconstructed with a certain degree of probability by comparing it with parallels in other visions. Several versions of redemption have a similar structure, including a prophetic introduction, in which: 1) an angel brings tidings of the eschaton to the visionary; 2) a prophetic-historical section relates to events that transpired and to characters who were active as a “prophecy after the event” (*vaticinium ex eventu*); 3) the apocalyptic vision is described.

⁸³ Parts of this section draw on and extend my earlier formulation; see Ben-Sasson, “The Vision of Daniel,” 334–335.

In general, the visions, including the names of rulers, are written cryptically and allusively. The era and events of their rule are encrypted in code-names, numerological calculations, and oblique references, if only to give them the aura of prophecies about future events. The writer foretells the future, and the reliability of the vision extends from historical figures and past events to descriptions of the eschaton.⁸⁴

The structure of the Vision of Daniel is based on that of the biblical Book of Daniel, and, as will become evident in the discussion below, it is likely that the content of the Vision is quite similar to that of the Judeo-Persian vision named *Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl* (hereinafter “QD”),⁸⁵ where, as in the Vision of Daniel, an angel reveals to Daniel a portrait of the end of days, including the rise to power of a series of rulers and an accounting of the duration and features of each of their respective reigns. There, the first rulers in the series are Persian Zoroastrians. Afterward there is a gap of four centuries, whereupon the list continues—as in The Vision—with Ishmaelite rulers, the first of whom is Muḥammad. This information about the rulers is likewise part of the *vaticinium ex eventu* whose realization, as it were, gives greater validity to prophecies about the future.

⁸⁴ On Dan 7–12, see Michael Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions: Textual, Contextual, and Inter-textual Approaches to the Book of Daniel* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 155–178; Joseph Dan, *History of Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Shazar, 2008), 998–1027. On methods of studying the history of apocalyptic works, see Paul J. Alexander, “Medieval Apocalypses as Historical Sources,” *The American Historical Review* 73.4 (1968): 997–1018. On Sefer Zerubbabel, see Himmelfarb, *Zerubbabel*, 13–34, 120–143; Newman, *Methodological Critique*, lvi n. 8, lxiii–lxxiv; Gil, “Zerubbabel,” 1–15; on the rich Daniel literature, see DiTommaso, *Daniel*; on the reception-history of the book of Daniel, see Katharina Bracht, and David S. du Toit (eds.), *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007).

⁸⁵ See Menahem Ben-Sasson, “Similar Versions”; below, ch. 3; Dan Y. Shapira, “‘Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl’—or ‘The Story of Daniel’—in Judaeo-Persian: The Text and its Translation,” *Sefunot* 22 (1999): 337–366 [Hebrew]; Shapira has suggested that the Judeo-Persian text of this part of the work is an abbreviated translation and reworking of sources that the author of QD had before him. See Shapira, “Qiṣṣa,” 339–340, as well as his introduction to his appendix below. I am grateful to Shapira for his continued interest, willingness to consult on my work on the Vision, and special efforts in taking the time to prepare an English translation of QD.

For similarities between QD and Sibylla Tiburtina, see Lutz Greisiger, *Messias—Endkaiser—Antichrist: Politische Apokalyphtik unter Juden und Christen des Nahen Ostens am Vorabend der arabischen Eroberung* (Orientalia Biblica et Christiana 21; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 164–165, 247–250. This similarity could explain the connection of some sources to QD, albeit not the current version of it, which is dated to the tenth century. See Shapira, “Qiṣṣa,” §37, 349 (Judeo-Persian original) and 362 (Hebrew translation), as well as nn. 65–66. See also below, 94–102.

We can presume that the missing introduction of the extant Vision of Daniel is similar to the beginning of QD. This presumption stems from a detailed comparison of the two works (undertaken below, ch. 3.1, 79–90). In the present edition, I have therefore elected to cite in full the first parts of the relevant sections of QD. The missing section of the Vision of Daniel most likely corresponds to the section of QD in which the author lists the kings who will appear in the future. The relevant section of QD is distinguished at its beginning by a new revelatory encounter between Daniel and an angel who explains the phases of redemption to him. We find in QD:

And I, Daniel, wore sackcloth and sat in the dust for many days. I did not eat meat and I did not drink wine. Day and night I was occupied with weeping and my eyes were like a fountain of water because the House of God was desolate. Then the Lord sent an angel: “O Daniel, why are you crying so bitterly?” And I said: “I am crying because of the Temple, for I saw it desolate, and in my time they killed the priests and the Levites, and all this evil came, and it is [still] coming upon me; how can I be silent?”

God said to me thus: “O Daniel, know so that I will tell you what will happen to the Israelites, when the end will come, how many kings will rule over them, how long they will be in exile, how their redemption and betterment will come about, and how long each king will rule over them!” [And all this] the angel taught me. He even showed all the sins of Israel, as they were. “O Daniel, tell the Israelites: ‘Fortunate are you who have kept the Lord’s commandments! Do penance day and night, observe a fast, and pray before the Lord at the time the Lord has commanded. Day and night seek the Lord, and do what the *Shekhinah*’s desire is!’”

The Lord said: “O Daniel, rejoice and praise the Lord and say: ‘Fortunate are you, Israel, for you keep the commandments of the Lord!’ O Daniel, I will show you how many kings there will be of each nation and faith, how long their kingdom will endure, and how this will come about. (QD, §§19–21)

As will be developed in greater detail below, the close relationship between these two works makes it likely that their similarity extends to their respective openings. Thus, the first part of the Vision of Daniel presumably recounts, as does QD, how Daniel prayed to God for salvation after Jerusalem’s destruction. God sent him an angel to illuminate for him the redemptive process, with reference to historical events.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ On the apocalypses presented as records of revelatory, mystical experiences, as opposed to the “ascent” apocalypses, which are part of a trend toward the textualization of revelations, reading them as self-referential, fictional narratives about ascent, driven in part by Biblical exegesis, see Martha Himmelfarb, “Ascent to Heaven” in *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 95–114; Martha Himmelfarb, “Revelation and Rabbiniization in Sefer Zerubabel and Sefer Eliyyahu,” in *Revelation, Literature, and Community in Late Antiquity*, ed. Philippa Townsend and Moulie Vidas (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 217–235.

The passage begins with a paraphrase of the Second Targum of Esther, an Aramaic compilation of legends and *midrashim* about events that occurred in the wake of the Temple's destruction. It retells the story of the treasures of the Temple, including Solomon's throne, which were lost and then found again. Its beginning describes Daniel's meetings with the kings of Babylon and Persia. Daniel relates to the Temple treasures in various prayers, supplications, and prophecies in the first part of QD, in the biblical Book of Daniel (chapters 1–5), and in a **limited** number of Christian and Muslim apocalypses.⁸⁷ For our purposes, especially important are the Syriac Vision of Daniel and the Vision of the Young Daniel. The proposed reconstruction yields the following outline of the complete Vision of Daniel⁸⁸:

Outline of the Proposed Reconstructed Vision of Daniel

*I. [The Revelation of the Word of God to Daniel]

- *A. Historical introduction
- *B. Daniel's captivity and reaction to the Temple's destruction
- *C. Daniel at the court of Nebuchadnezzar—Curing and Interpreting

⁸⁷ *Esther Rabbah* 1:12; see also, *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana* 26:1; Second Targum of Esther 1:2. On the procuring of the Temple vessels, see "Pirkei Mashi'ah," in Reeves, *Trajectories*: 156 (and n. 39: for the citation from *Pereq R. Yoshiyahu*); "Ten Signs," Reeves, *Trajectories*: 119, 124, and 189, note 10, which refers also to: Ithamar Gruenwald, "Re'uyot Yehezq'el," in *Temirin: Texts and Studies in Kabbala and Hasidism*, vol. 1, ed. Israel Weinstock (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1972), 110: "He (God) showed him (Ezekiel) the mountain at whose base is a river (?) by which the Temple vessels are destined to be restored."

On the throne of Solomon, see Georg Salzberger, *Salomos Tempelbau und Thron in der semitischen Sagenliteratur* (Berlin: Mayer and Müller, 1912), 60–74 for the Jewish traditions in particular; Évelyne Ville-Patlagean, "Une image de Salomon en basileus byzantine," *Revue des Études Juives* 121 (1962): 9–33; Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 24–26 and n. 63; DiTommaso, *Daniel*, index under: Temple Vessels, Throne of Solomon; Benjamin Garstad (ed. and trans.), *Apocalypse Pseudo-Methodius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 93–95.

On Islamic traditions, see Saïd Amir Arjomand, "Islamic Apocalypticism in the Classic Period," in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 2, ed. Bernard McGinn et al. (New York and London: Continuum, 1998), 255; Michael Cook, "An Early Islamic Apocalyptic Chronicle," *JNES* 52 (1993): 25–29; Cook, *Studies*, 55–59 and 256–257 (Antioch Cave of Treasures); Uri Rubin, *Between Bible and Qur'an: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1999), 259–261; Nu'aym b. Hammād al-Marwazī, *"The Book of Tribulations": The Syrian Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition*, trans. and ed. David B. Cook (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 203, 207, 230, 260, 286, 293, 297.

⁸⁸ To distinguish this proposed reconstruction with the outline of the unreconstructed Vision of Daniel, we have added the "*" character. Only the first section is the result of the proposed reconstruction. The remainder of the outline follows the order of the extant Vision.

- *D. Daniel refuses to worship the statue, is thrown to the furnace, and is miraculously saved
- *E. Belshazzar and the inscription on the wall
- *F. Daniel's flight to King Cyrus of Persia
- *G. Cyrus's conquest of Babylon and the deposition of the Temple vessels
- *H. Daniel and Ezra accompany him; Ezra hides
- *I. Daniel and Darius; Darius kills Cyrus; Daniel hides; Darius's blindness
- *J. Daniel's visions: transition to the eschatological part
- *K. Daniel's prayer to God for salvation
- *L. God sends an angel to illuminate for Daniel the historical-redemptive process
- *M. The angel brings tidings of the eschaton to Daniel

***II. Signs of the Messiah; *vaticinium ex eventu*; the prophetic-historical section; events and characters**

- *A. The first Caliphs and the "exact" Umayyad list of the kings of Ishmael] (The first nine kings in the list are reconstructed from the list in QD; the extant Vision of Daniel begins with the tenth king.)
- B. Early 'Abbāsid caliphs
- C. The "vague list" of the kings of Ishmael

III. Messianic Birth Pangs

- A. The Son of the Daughter of Levi
- B. Armilus, Son of the Female Figure
- C. Messiah ben Joseph
- D. Flight to the Wilderness

IV. The Redemption

- E. Destruction of remaining enemies
- F. Resurrection of the dead
- G. Rebuilding of Jerusalem
- H. Ingathering of exiles
- I. The age of the messiah: eternal life; the banquet of messiah; kingship; and priesthood

V. Conclusion

- A. Daniel finds the vision comforting and uplifting
- B. Elijah, Zerubbabel, and Ezra instruct Daniel to write down the prophecy
- C. The angel instructs Daniel to seal the Vision until the time of Israel's salvation

2.2 Literary Analysis of the Vision of Daniel—Structure, Genre, Setting and Intention

Daniel's apocalypses have been of scholarly interest for more than four centuries, and in our generation, the scholar most identified with the topic is Lorenzo DiTommaso. DiTommaso's philological, thematic, methodical and bibliographical works are updated frequently, and his experience is generously shared worldwide.⁸⁹

In an interim overview of the field, published in 2018, he characterized apocalyptic literature attributed to the prophet Daniel as:

... works that take their revelatory inspiration from the biblical book, but were composed in later centuries and vastly different social milieus. These works include both stand-alone apocalypses and embedded writings in other works, and were composed by Christians, Jews, and Muslims. ... All these Daniel apocalypses are new predictions, not commentaries.

He points to the results of earlier works to conclude that the majority of the Daniel apocalypses:

... are indeed textually related, but not in a manner that always can be described in genealogical terms or with recourse to a single, hypothetical *Urtext*. Instead, many of the apocalypses appear to be a **pastiche of material both old and new. The primary building block of this re-combinatory process**—i.e., the smallest unit to demonstrate textual consistency in literary contexts over time—is the individual oracle.⁹⁰

DiTommaso summarized the current state of knowledge regarding the twenty-seven Daniel apocalyptic as representatives of an apocalyptic “medieval millennium” (5th–16th centuries), in ten points. The four most relevant for our purposes are as follows:

- “The great majority of these works are Christian compositions, but at least one Islamic example survives, as well as several medieval Jewish ones. Although reflecting Jewish or Muslim concerns in their theological character, these writings cannot be isolated either from the Christian Daniel apocalyptic, which they resemble in their general contours and thematic details, or from the currents of medieval Christian apocalyptic literature more broadly, which informed the shape of apocalyptic speculation in medieval Judaism and Islam.

⁸⁹ The first publications date back to the end of the sixteenth century. See DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 306, n. 282.

⁹⁰ DiTommaso, “Overview,” 277. Emphasis added.

- In their orientation, the Daniel apocalyptic take their cue from the revelatory visions of the biblical Book of Daniel insofar as they focus, to a very great degree, on explaining the meaning of history and its end.
- The Daniel apocalyptic are new predictions, not commentaries on or interpretations of the Book of Daniel. Moreover, their themes and imagery are more reflective of the common medieval apocalyptic tradition than they are of the biblical book.
- In their structure, some Daniel apocalyptic reflect the pattern of the revelatory visions of the classic ancient ‘historical’ apocalypses like Daniel and *4 Ezra*, i.e., the revelatory vision on the part of the seer, followed by the interpretation of the vision by an angelic figure. A few apocryphal Daniel apocalypses also contain a narrative section that precedes the revelation.”

DiTommaso directs future students of these works:

... to posit a re-combinatory process of composition, where old oracle-units were constantly reused to create new apocalypses that fit new circumstances. ...[T]hese texts constantly changing variety of older oracle-units seems to have been available to different apocalypticists at various periods, and their literary re-combination into new forms greatly depended on the requirements of the contemporary situation, among other things.⁹¹

Considering these statements, he suggested that these works of medieval apocalyptic themes, oracles, and tropes should be analyzed according to six criteria:

1. Geographic scope
2. Degree of re-combinatory form
3. Extent to which this process also drew on coherent “complexes” of writings attributed to authoritative figures
4. Predominance of the “historical” versus “otherworldly” type of writing
5. Distinctive set of eschatological expectations (e.g., Last Roman Emperor, Antichrist, Gog and Magog)
6. An extraordinary ability to transcend nearly every boundary—religious, linguistic, social, and geographic

DiTommaso reiterates that:

Medieval apocalyptic was at once Christian, Jewish, and Islamic; it was both high culture and low literature; it was read by stakeholder elements in society and heard and known by the multitudes outside; it was deployed by different sides in the same struggle; it was employed

⁹¹ DiTommaso, “Overview,” 306–309.

to describe the enemy outside the walls and the enemy within them; and it was used, re-used, and used again, in an extraordinary variety of social settings.⁹²

The Vision of Daniel should be read against the backdrop of DiTommaso's conclusions, which are well-reasoned and based on fragments of various visions of Daniel. The Vision of Daniel is another example of a work that contains the great majority of features of contemporaneous works. The work is constructed of subunits, or 'building blocks,' that are typical of other compositions, some of which can be identified in various apocalyptic works. This being the case, it stands to reason that:

- a. features that seem like clear literary and historical anchors merely attest to the anchoring of the earlier subunits of the Vision.
- b. one must exercise caution about drawing direct lines of influence based on similarities between the building blocks of the Vision of Daniel and those of other visions. These similarities are likely to result from the influence of mediators and agents that are very distant geographically and temporally.

Our discussion will therefore suffice with an indication of possible conclusions without definitively deciding the question of where and when the work was composed.⁹³

The complete Vision of Daniel is an example of a historical apocalypse, and it also exhibits other characteristics of apocalyptic literature—Jewish and non-Jewish alike—from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. As will be described in detail below, the structure of the work, the names of people and places it mentions, and its general contents are similar to other apocalyptic works, written in other languages and religious traditions, some of which predate it. The visionary figure in the present work, Daniel, is the visionary figure in many apocalyptic works, and the figures share much in common. The two singular features of the Vision of Daniel—the names and numbers of the rulers it lists—will be addressed below in detail, in the elucidation of the text of the Vision, accompanied by citations and references to parallels and to scholarly literature.

The surviving Vision of Daniel is composed of three distinct parts: a. the signs of redemption—the historical section; b. the 'birth pangs' of the messiah—enemies; c. the redemption. This subdivision works for many other apocalyptic works, though the precise mix of the three components differs from work to work. This

⁹² DiTommaso, "Overview," 311–312.

⁹³ This is in contrast to the decisiveness that characterizes my earlier discussion of the Vision of Daniel.

further reinforces the approach that views these works as anthologies constructed from building blocks that were quarried from a different source, sometimes due to the author-compiler's selection of material from among multiple sources at his disposal. These three building blocks are the three main units of the Vision, but within them additional editorial work, which supplement and update the Vision to comport with events and sources that came to the later editor's attention, is discernible.

As suggested above, the subject of the first part, which is now missing, is revelation through a dream that features dialogue between Daniel and an angel (a 'revelatory dialogic angelic-mediation vision') and concludes with the beginning of the historical chapter and the first rulers it enumerates.

Since the Vision is classified among the historical apocalypses, it would be proper to characterize the genre of the work in accordance with each of its components. However, since the beginning is missing, using the surviving parts of the Vision and our attempted reconstruction, we can only hypothesize that the Vision began with a revelation by an angel (the medium of revelation). The Vision does not rely on a symbolic dream or vision, but on a revelation that includes angelic discourse with the author and direct revelation by God, which accompanies both of the later stages of events. The work as a whole can be characterized as revelatory dialogue, like chapters 7–11 of the biblical Book of Daniel. The Vision contains all subcomponents of the historical apocalyptic pattern: *ex eventu* prophecy, eschatological predictions, signs of the end, and epiphany of heavenly intervention. It does not, however, contain a description of a judgment scene, but this is unremarkable, as the Vision of Daniel contains most features of a historical apocalypse.⁹⁴

2.2.1 Signs of Redemption: The Historical Chapter

Detailed Structure

A. The Umayyad Caliphs

- a. X. Sulaymān—10 years
- b. XI. 'Umar—3 years
- c. XII. Yazīd—8 years, 2 months

⁹⁴ John J. Collins, *Daniel, with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 2–14; based on his fundamental work: John J. Collins (ed.), *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979); we updated our analysis after his 2016 publication: John J. Collins, "The Genre Apocalypse Reconsidered," *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 20.1: 21–40.

B. The Early ‘Abbāsīd Caliphs

- a. XIII. Abū Dja‘far—22 years
- b. XVII (XIV?). Abū Dja‘far—22 years⁹⁵
- c. [XIV] Maḥdī—10 years
- d. [XV] Musa—1 year, 5 days
- e. [XVI] Hārūn—23 years
- f. [XVII] Muḥammad [Al-‘Amīn]—4 years, 6 months
- g. [XVIII] His brother [Al-Ma‘mūn]
- h. [XIX] “And after him will reign an officer from his family, Muḥammad by name” [Mu‘taṣim]

C. The “Vague List” of the Kings of Ishmael

- a. [XX] The king from the East [= Al-Wāthiq] and his war against the He-Goat
- b. The five sons of Fatima
- c. Maḥdī—3 years

Though the beginning of the Vision is cut off, the first chapter is still the longest of the Vision’s three chapters—twice as long as the third chapter (‘Redemption’) and about ten percent longer than the chapter on the enemies of the messiah (‘Messianic Birth Pangs’). Whether a correct reconstruction of the beginning is maximalist, and like in QD, the author includes sections of the Second Targum of Esther and tales of Daniel and the kings of Babylon and Persia, or it begins the enumeration of Muslim rulers after a succinct revelation and a brief introduction, the historical part would remain the longest part of the Vision, by a wide margin.

A similar division, whereby the historical portion and the preface to the apocalyptic vision are the longest part, can be found in other historical apocalyptic works, though not in all. An example of a patently different division is the responsum attributed to R. Hai Gaon concerning the final salvation.⁹⁶ The difference of that work’s genre—a response to a question about the end of days—renders a prophetic-historical component superfluous; the responsum only portrays the future, so any treatment of the past is absent. The reason for the lengthy first part of historical apocalyptic works is rooted in their contents; since this part describes past events, it is easy and convenient to write at greater length, relying on historiographic works that the authors of apocalyptic texts always have close by.

⁹⁵ The doubled description of Abū Dja‘far can attest that this is a transitional segment or a fragment left over from the concatenation of two parts of the Vision, which were joined during the transition from Umayyad rule to Abbasid rule. See below, 94–97.

⁹⁶ Reeves, *Trajectories*, 133–143.

Moreover, since apocalyptic compositions graft together the work of authors and copyists, it must be considered that the work is not all of a piece. That is, its discernible subcomponents not only were not composed by a single author, but were not even copied and redacted by a single copyist. Rather, they were collected from more than one work. Therefore, fragments that were composed, updated, and copied at various times become a single work at the hands of the final editor.

Genre

The distinctive genre of the first chapter is ‘*vaticinium ex eventu*,’ a historical prophecy that relates to events that occurred and to figures who were active, as a retroactive prophecy.⁹⁷ The first chapter is the patently historical part of the apocalypse. Lists of caliphs and descriptions of their actions, not necessarily their actions vis-à-vis the Jews, is indicative of their origin. In this genre, the rise and deeds of rulers are treated as part of the prophecy, but the details are based on historiographic works or other apocalyptic works—in the original, reworked, or translated—which are meant to give the work a sense of credibility; just as the information in this part has ‘proven’ accurate, so the next parts of the Vision should be deemed credible. Since this section is written as a prophecy that has already been fulfilled, the more detailed and precise the list, the more it shows that the person bringing this prophecy to public attention—the author of the Vision of Daniel—is accurately portraying the end of days.

The detailed historical segment of the Vision, which contains a wealth of information, typifies apocalyptic works composed after the rise of Islam, including Christian and Muslim visions of the period. The serial enumeration of rulers in the historical section focuses on numbers that the potential audience would deem symbolic due to the sanctity and symbolism of counting *per se*—an example of this is multiples of the number 7, which recurs throughout the biblical Book of Daniel—and primarily because behind such enumerations are patterns, understood by readers, that allude to the significance of the number of rulers. Examples of this include the number of rulers in biblical dynasties and traditions that the redemption will arrive after a specific number of rulers—like the twelve rulers of Islamic tradition.⁹⁸

It is possible that the number of rulers in the Vision of Daniel is intended to reach the number 20, as the biblical Daniel alludes to ten rulers with ten horns.

⁹⁷ See Alexander, “Medieval Apocalypses,” 997–1018.

⁹⁸ On the importance of cycles of rulers leading to the apocalypse in Muslim sources, see Cook, *Studies*, 36–40.

Listing rulers and dynasties as part of an eschatological vision is common to many apocalyptic works, drawing on chapter 7 of the biblical Daniel, and its mention of ten rulers:

After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a **fourth** beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had **ten** horns. I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words. (Daniel 7:7–8) Then I wished to know the truth about the **fourth** beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; and the **ten** horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. (vv. 19–20)

The **ten** horns are **ten kings** who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings. (v. 24)

A list of the ten kings appears in many versions of the apocalypse, including the Book of Zerubbabel, attesting to the plausibility that the list of rulers is a semi-independent literary unit.⁹⁹ In the apocalyptic works addressed here, from the seventh century on, the lists of rulers present scholars with a challenge, as comprehending them in proper chronological context is the basis for identifying the time and place of composition. This is the key to dating the works, enriching our historical knowledge about the period of composition, and understanding something of the contemporary mood. While most lists are generic, filled with symbols from earlier visions, some of them are specific and may contain allusions to historical figures. These include: Bahira Legend, Pseudo-Shenute, Pseudo-Athanasius, Coptic Daniel XIV Vision, The Apocalypse of Peter/Book of the Rolls, and Stephen of Alexan-

⁹⁹ Himmelfarb, *Zerubbabel*, 4, 15–17, 130 (discussion); 151, 155–156 (text). A list of rulers, their defining features, and the combinations of their names appears also in an eschatological vision from a Genizah fragment, Oxford Ms. Heb. f. 27.43, published in 1897; re-published in Shlomo Aharon Wertheimer, *Batei Midrashot*, vol. 2 (2nd ed.; Jerusalem: Ktab Wasopher, 1968), 504–505 [Hebrew]; Israël Lévi, “Une apocalypse judéo-arabe,” *Revue des Études Juives* 67 (1914): 178–182; DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 162, n. 310. See also the corrections and notes in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 438–439; Reeves, *Trajectories*, 40, 50–51; 77–78 (as part of *Nistarot De-Rashbi*). Some of the figures from the Umayyad Caliphate and their deeds appear in the eschatological *Nistarot De-Rashbi* (especially the list of caliphs at 177–178); Newman, “Methodological Critique,” lxxxi–lxxxviii.

dria, and among Jewish apocalypses: *Nistarot De-Rashbi*, the Jewish Apocalypse on the Umayyads, and QD.¹⁰⁰

A few works contain the names, lengths of reign, and events that typify the rulers, and the Vision of Daniel is among them. It includes the names of many caliphs—almost twenty. A similar number appear in other apocalyptic works, written by members of other religions and in various languages. These include: Pseudo-Shenute, Samuel of Qalamun and Pisentius of Qift, Coptic Daniel XIV Vision, the Jewish Apocalypse on the Umayyads, and QD, as discussed below.

Like the Vision of Daniel, these works also list about twenty rulers. With the exception of QD, the larger structure of each work differs from the structure of the Vision of Daniel. However, the segment that includes the list of rulers is quite similar in its format, in relating to Muslim rulers, in their names, and in mentioning the duration and character of their reigns. A detailed comparison of these lists shows that they contain differences. This attests that although they descend from similar traditions with regard to the number of rulers, each list was informed by different sources. This is highlighted in Jos van Lent's comparison of three Coptic works: Pseudo-Shenute, Coptic Daniel XIV Vision, and Samuel of Qalamun.¹⁰¹ Comparing the Jewish traditions of this segment demonstrates a similar phenomenon—a tradition about many rulers but no full correspondence in how they order and characterize their reigns.

Assuming that the subunit listing the rulers was originally semi-independent and initially contained ten rulers, it can explain—if only partially—the similar format and even some features of several lists of rulers. This demands extra caution when using and characterizing lists that are not supported by any parallel documentation.

Returning to the Vision of Daniel, the date of composition of this section is the link between the past and the arena where eschatological events will play out. The author therefore saw fit to hide his name and not mention the years of his ministry, thus imbuing the prophecy about the transitional period with greater credibility. The time of the Vision's writing is the time of redemption, so allusions to it and to events deemed apocalyptic will be specific, but his name will never be said

100 Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Gorgias Islamic Studies 7; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2019), 217–220, 228–257; DiTommaso, “Overview;” Jos M. van Lent, “The Nineteen Muslim kings in Coptic apocalypses,” *Parole de l’Orient* 25 (2000): 643–693; Jos M. van Lent, “The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 3: 1050–1200, eds. David Thomas et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 697–703.

101 van Lent, “Nineteen Muslim kings;” van Lent, “Fourteenth Vision;” DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 179–184; DiTommaso, “Overview;” 300–303.

explicitly. The vague transitional link between the historical section—the part that already happened—and the part that is happening at the time of composition is similar to the transitional links within the genre of historical apocalypse.

As is typical of apocalyptic visions, when the redemption did not arrive soon after the composition of the apocalyptic work, later readers ‘updated’ it. The update was done in the late tenth century; it mentions the sons of Fatima, suggests that the dynasty included five kings, and concludes the historical chapter with some dubious information about the nature of the dynasty. Fuzzy statements like these about the Fatimids also characterize the historical chapter of QD, even if the content of the statements differs.

The genre of transitional parts of apocalyptic works is very distinct and allows us to determine the time and place of the work’s composition with a high degree of likelihood.¹⁰²

In the historical section as well, the literary genre is typical of sacred writings. The language of the work is metered, and the format of the reporting recurs: name of the ruler, major deeds, and duration of his rule. This is similar to the pattern of reporting in Scripture: “After him ruled ... and it was ... and he died ... his reign was X years ... and after him ruled. ...” The language of the Vision combines Scriptural language and fragments of verses with Rabbinic idiom and allusions to *midrashim*. The pattern thus frames the message of the historical portion using a highly authoritative framing, namely, ancient, sacred reading traditions.

Setting

The site of events described in the Vision is amply provided in its first part: the capital cities of the caliphates, Damascus and Baghdad. The capital is the point of origin, from where the instigators of the events set forth, to where they return, and which determines and manifests the character of the rulers: what they create and build, what they demolish and destroy, or anything in between; their idleness and ineffectiveness; and the selective description of events and intrigues of their courts. The real world of the Near East and its battlefields is the tentpole from which the apocalypse stretches out. The expansive movement between the cardinal directions—east, west, north, and south—illuminates the author’s ultimate message: that the ostensibly human actions and initiatives described in the work are in fact part of a global, cosmic plan. Wars are interpreted as part of a higher agency;

¹⁰² On the modes of transition between historical events and visions of the future, see Alexander, “Medieval Apocalypses.”

success and failure attest to the stature of those responsible for them in the upper worlds.¹⁰³

In the first part of the Vision, just before the transitional section from history to the stages of redemption, focus shifts to the battles between ‘Abbāsid Caliph al-Mu‘taṣim, the Zutt (of Hindi origin, hinted in 1b:18), other rebellions, and the Byzantine Emperor Theophilos. These wars began in 837 CE, when Theophilos personally led a major campaign to the area of the upper Euphrates, conquering the cities of Arsamosata and Sozopetra—al-Mu‘taṣim’s birthplace—and forcing the city of Melitene to pay tribute and hand over hostages. The battles between the armies lasted more than two years and spread to the heart of the Byzantine Empire (Anzin/Dazimon) and south to Damascus, as written in the Vision of Daniel.¹⁰⁴

The series of challenges to the ‘Abbāsid Caliph al-Mu‘taṣim within the boundaries of Byzantium and Syria is linked to two people in whose actions we can detect justification for their being labeled with titles that bear anti-messianic resonances: the biblical expression ‘He-Goat’ (‘Zefir ‘Izim’), applied to Theophilos, and the Islamic expression ‘al-Sufyānī’ (identified with Abū Ḥarb Tamīm, known as al-Mubārka’). The struggle against them transpires in the 840s, and these events and battles thus provide the temporal and geographic setting for the historical portion of the work.

This part of the Vision is arranged according to the linear progression of time. Rulers and events follow one another consecutively, and there is one focus at each stage. In this part, there are no simultaneous occurrences, there are no associative flashbacks to parallel events from ancient times, and events do not recur. The author thus methodically and rhythmically leads the reader of the Vision forward to the important destination—the redemption.

Intention

The purpose of the section that presents events that already transpired is to make the Vision more familiar to an audience living in the author’s time and place, thus giving it the authority of a prophecy that foretold the events. It also brings readers closer to comprehending that the events it reports, including the events that they experienced without mediation, are part of a divine master plan—like the vision for the future that follows. This intention is similar to that of the author of the biblical Book of Daniel (8:25, 10:20, 11:1–2) and the following words of the Vision’s

¹⁰³ Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Armenian Apocalyptic and Mediaeval Apocalypticism: Some Reflections,” in *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective. Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Robert W. Thompson on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Kevork B. Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 733, 742.

¹⁰⁴ See below ch. 3.3.1, 100.

author: “all the words I have said to you are truth” (2b, 4–5, 2:6). The historical legacy described in the Vision serves as a platform for constructing a shared identity among Jews living in the borderlands between the southern Byzantine Empire and the ‘Abbāsid Caliphate. The formation of this shared identity is meant to supplement the Vision’s authority with a sense of identification with the later contents of the work, the heralding of redemption. The deployment in the Vision of Scriptural verses, especially from prophecies of redemption, and midrashic passages about the end of days, brings the essence of political events into the audience’s world, shaped by its sacred sources—Scripture and the Oral Torah—written in Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew.

The moral expressions that accompany the descriptions of the kings signify a secondary intention. The author—or at least the sources at his disposal—has a hidden ethical agenda whose manifestation is binary and vociferous. Its positive assessments of rulers use expressions like ‘good,’ ‘true,’ ‘peace,’ ‘wise,’ and ‘serenity.’ In contrast, in some cases, even when referring to the same ruler, it uses patently negative expressions: ‘evil,’ ‘wicked,’ ‘commotion,’ ‘rob,’ and ‘lover of harlotry.’¹⁰⁵ This binary moral assessment, already in the historical section of the work, serves as preparation for the encounter with key figures of the apocalypse: the messiahs and their enemies. Below we will return to these expressions to clarify the intention of the Vision’s author; did he want to educate his readers, help them improve their character, or pursue a different ethical agenda?

2.2.2 Messianic Birth Pangs

Detailed Structure

A. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Camp of his Enemies: The Northerners and Gog and Magog

- a. Transitional section, from the slaughter of the Ishmaelites to their flight to the desert
- b. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Northerners besiege Babylon, despoiling, and the flight of the residents
- c. The fearsome appearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi
- d. Gog and Magog join his camp
- e. The persecution of Israel, destruction of enemies, and salvation of Israel by God

¹⁰⁵ Cook, *Studies*, 38–45, 223–224, 234–247.

- B. Daniel's Fear and the Angel's Interpretation¹⁰⁶
- C. Armilus, Son of the Female Figure, and his Camp
 - a. Armilus and the Son of the Daughter of Levi
 - b. Armilus's appearance
 - c. Armilus's camp
 - d. Armilus claims to be the messiah
 - i. First wonder: bringing food to the faithful
 - ii. His messiahship is accepted
 - iii. Armilus and his camp in the holy place (Jerusalem?)
- D. **Armilus, the Righteous Man of Ephraim [Messiah ben Joseph?] and his Camp: The First Encounter**
 - a. The direct challenge to Armilus's messiahship
 - b. Signs of his messiahship: The Staff of Moses and Jar of Manna
- E. **The Response to Armilus's Messiah Claims by the Righteous Man of Ephraim and his Jewish Followers: First Flight to the Wilderness**
 - a. Prayer and Lament
 - b. God's response
 - i. The promise for the future
 - ii. God's counsel for dealing with Armilus—the question of resurrection
- F. **Armilus, Messiah ben Joseph, and his Camp: Second Encounter**
 - a. The request to resurrect the dead
 - b. Armilus's reaction—killing Messiah ben Joseph
- G. **The Response of the Faithful to the Killing of Messiah ben Joseph: the Second Flight to the Wilderness of Judea**
 - a. Lament and prayer
 - b. God's providence for the faithful who fled
 - i. the miracle of food and drink
 - ii. The miracle of flexible time—shortened time periods in advance of the redemption

The second chapter of the Vision is quite long and detailed. It is devoted to describing the enemies of the messiah who torment the people of Israel, like the chapters on the Antichrist and Dajjāl that appear in Christian and Muslim apocalyptic works. In the Vision, the description focuses on two figures and surveys two fate-

¹⁰⁶ This segment returns our attention to the author (Daniel), who recounts his feelings, his revelation, and the angel's interpretation of events. This can be viewed as a transitional section or as a vestige of the unification of two parts of the Vision.

ful confrontations between them and the true messiahs—Messiah ben (= son of) Joseph and Messiah ben David. The first confrontation is shorter and relates to the enemy called the Son of the Daughter of Levi. Before the Vision, this enemy of the messiah is described in only two apocalypses, both Christian, which apparently relied on one source, as will be discussed at greater length in chapter 4.3 below. This enemy sows general mayhem in the world, and both Jews and Muslims suffer. The Vision devotes particular attention to his fearsome appearance. The Northerners join the Son of the Daughter of Levi, as do the nations of the East and West and Gog and Magog—enemies of the Redeemer who appear in the Book of Ezekiel. In this section, the threat ends through God's intervention, when He kills the Son of the Daughter of Levi, thus temporarily saving Israel. This is when the angel reappears—assuming that it first appeared at the beginning of the Vision, as in other such works. The angel appears on earth (in contrast to apocalyptic instances in which the visionary ascends to behold a heavenly sight in the upper worlds), in response to Daniel's anguished call. The angel appears as the revealer of the Vision, with all its details of the future, as the interpreter of the meaning of the war against the enemies of the messiah, and as the explainer of how best to challenge the glut of enemies described.

Genre

The second chapter of the Vision belongs to the genre of 'apocalyptic vision,' and it includes a brief prophetic section—apparently part of the dream that frames the overall work—with an angelic interpretation of the events. The unit as a whole is a 'regal prophecy,' and it is written in the style of a historical event.

The enemies of the messiah arrive with an anonymous formulation, like those found in Ezekiel 38 and 39 (the chapters of Gog and Magog) and chapters 11 and 12 of the biblical Book of Daniel.

Eschatological visions describe the distress of those who await salvation—distress caused by powerful, mythological enemies of the messiah. The harshest and most detailed descriptions are found just before the appearance of the redeemer and the completing of the salvation. The details of the suffering contemporaneous with the authors of medieval apocalyptic works and their adjustment to resemble earlier canonic works (the Jewish Bible, the New Testament, and the Quran) are meant to serve as a refuge and comfort to suffering believers, as they show that the believers' predicament was temporary, and that the latter were on a secure path to salvation. Just as the promise of suffering, as written in those ancient works, is fulfilled, so will the promise of salvation be realized. Moreover, the greater and more specific the difficulties of survival are, the more powerful the eventual redemption will be.

A pair of enemies of the messiah (who pretend to be messiahs) against a pair of true messiahs became part of apocalyptic discourse in the first centuries of the common era, as will be discussed below. The concrete figures of the messiah's enemies—the Son of the Daughter of Levi, Gog and Magog, and Armilus—are mythic and fearsome.

These characterizations of terrible enemies hark back to Scriptural descriptions (of symbolic beasts in chapters 7–11 of Daniel) and *midrashim* about enemies of the messiah—consolidating in the figure of Armilus in the Book of Zerubbabel. The Son of the Daughter of Levi is a singular figure that can help us decipher the time, place, and context of the composition of the Vision of Daniel, as will be discussed below (ch. 4).

The mythic figures are accompanied by a series of mythical actions. This series is what gives the second chapter of the Vision its status as part of an 'apocalyptic vision': the actions of these figures are human, but their appearance is not. Their dimensions are enormous, and they have strange, terrifying, demonic appearances. Armilus is also capable of supernatural acts: calling upon beasts, birds, and fish to provide food to the camp of those faithful to him, and reproduction of biblical miracles like bringing down manna and making the staff flower. These wonders are typical of tests of the people's faith by the emergence of wonder-working false messiahs. They falsely and misleadingly grant Armilus messianic authority, and his function is to purify Israel by differentiating between those who are deceived by him and those who remain faithful. Those who remain loyal to the faith of Israel can expect, at the very least, the immediate fulfillment of divine miracles, food from heaven, and water flowing beneath the Sanctuary.¹⁰⁷

Armilus is part of the divine masterplan for the final stages of redemption, and he thus became the figure that signifies the genre of historical apocalypse. He bears the characteristics of the Antichrist familiar from the New Testament and of the Dajjāl from Islam. He lies and creates illusions, claims the messiahship, works miracles, and kills the first messiah (Messiah ben Ephraim or Messiah ben Joseph). The combination of fearsomeness and deceit that he contributes to the plot of the messianic birth pangs helps distinguish between the true believers, who are worthy of redemption, and the weak of faith, who will be destroyed with the camp of the messiah's enemies. Armilus thus becomes a herald of the messiah's arrival.

The particulars of the description of Armilus point us toward the source of the genre of this section of the Vision. An examination of Christian and Muslim sources demonstrates the uniqueness and originality of the description of Armilus. As we will see below (ch. 4, 106–119), the description of Armilus and his actions in

¹⁰⁷ See Cook, *Studies*, 98–102.

the Vision of Daniel is **similar in most details** to the description of the ‘king of the West’ in QD, and **differs in most details** from his description in other works, including the Book of Zerubbabel, the Prayer of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai (both versions), the Ten Signs (in various versions, in the seventh sign),¹⁰⁸ *Midrash Vayosha* (*eyin ketanah* and *eyin gedolah*),¹⁰⁹ and the various descriptions of the Antichrist. This detailed description is not found in extant Christian and Muslim sources. At this point, we will suffice with the assignment of the description of Armilus to a genre without determining its textual genealogy.¹¹⁰

Another mythic figure that appears in the second part of the Vision is Messiah ben Ephraim, who is identical to Messiah ben Joseph. In this part of the Vision (as in QD), he is regularly mentioned only in his descent from Ephraim or with the added honorific, ‘righteous.’

A close study of the two versions of this section—from the Vision and from QD—indicates the possibility that both are based on a common source. As we will see below, even if one version is based on the other, it means it draws on the base version in one language or the other, not on the specific version that has come down to us. In the Hebrew version, aside from clear copyists’ errors, we will see that the numbering of the kings could have been added in a later iteration, and this is why the numbering stops where the text became corrupt. In certain sections, the similarities between the two versions are very clear, and in other sections it is less clear, as in works of this sort it was easy for redactors to add details from other sources.

It is worth pointing out another difference that seems significant and can indicate the directionality of the influence. According to the version in the Vision, the enemy of the messiah manages to produce the first three signs, or at least appear to; he is incapable only of resurrecting the dead. According to the QD version, he fails all the tests.¹¹¹ On this point, the Hebrew version is clearly preferable; if Armilus fails the earlier, easier tests, there would be no reason to demand that he perform

108 On the “Ten Signs” (*“Eser Otot”*) traditions, see Reeves, *Trajectories*, 106–110; Newman, “Methodological Critique,” lxxxi–lxxxviii.

109 Reeves, *Trajectories*, 172–178.

110 On the problematic nature of determining textual genealogies in visions of Daniel, see DiTommaso, “Overview.” Armilus is discussed at greater length below, in ch. 4, along with the enemies of the messiah.

111 The distinction between one who fails to work wonders and one who succeeds is found in Scripture, in the description of the false prophet who gives a sign and wonder that come true as part of the process by which “the Lord your God is testing you to see whether you really love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul” (Deut 13:4)—as in the Armilus episode. A similar power is attributed in the Christian tradition, in sources that describe the dangers of the Antichrist

the more challenging fourth test, namely, reviving the dead. The QD version misses all the dramatic tension. It seems that the intermediary redactor of QD was unwilling to countenance the possibility that the enemy of the messiah would succeed in any of these tests, so he ‘fixed’ the original story, which is better reflected in the Vision of Daniel version. It therefore seems that if one of the versions of this particular tradition is based on the other, it is QD that is based on the Vision. In the broader discussion of the connections between the Vision and QD, in chapter 4, I will raise the possibility that both are based on a third source, and that each of them is closer to the original with respect to certain points.

The righteous Ephraimite is the messiah who struggles against Armilus and, at the end of the chapter, is killed by Armilus. In the third chapter of the Vision, he is resurrected and leads the major military battles against Armilus and his camps, defeating them. Both times he is mentioned in the third chapter he is called Messiah ben Joseph. (One of those instances is in tandem with the sole mention of ‘Messiah ben David’; likewise, in QD, ‘ben Joseph’ is only mentioned in the later section.)

The figure of Messiah, ben Ephraim or ben Joseph, is a fixture of canonical Jewish literature—*midrashim*, exegesis, and translations of Scripture—from ancient times. Some date the emergence of this figure to the first century CE, and some to a century later. Among the established characteristics of this figure, with varying degrees of specificity, are that he is a military figure, active at the front lines of apocalyptic events (‘the military messiah’), that he is killed by the archenemy of the messiah, and that he is resurrected. Whether one espouses an early or late dating for the emergence of this figure, there is no dispute that these motifs obtained (additional?) canonic crystallization in the seventh-century Book of Zerubbabel. For our present purposes, anchoring the tradition in the seventh century suffices to pave the way to its adoption in the Vision of Daniel.¹¹²

(2 John 9; 1 John 2:11; 1 Timothy 4:1). For a discussion of the links between the Vision and QD, see below, ch. 3.1.

112 On Messiah ben Joseph, see Joseph (Hans) Heinemann, *Aggadah and its Development* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), 131 [Hebrew]; Ezra Fleischer, “Solving the Qiliri Riddle,” *Tarbiz* 54.3 (1985): 402, n. 55 and 406, n. 66; *bSukkah* 52a [a tannaitic source]; Israel Knohl, “On ‘the Son of God,’ Armilus, and Messiah ben Joseph,” *Tarbiz* 68 (1998): 13–37 [Hebrew], especially 30–37. On Messiah ben Joseph’s death at the hands of Armilus as a figuration of Jesus, son of Joseph, and on his identification with Messiah ben Ephraim, see Israel J. Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008): 33–37. Martha Himmelfarb dealt extensively with this issue in connection with the traditions available to the author of the Book of Zerubbabel; see Himmelfarb, *Jewish Messiahs*, 84–89, 99–119. See also below, in the discussion of the genre of redemption.

The biblical template returns in the second chapter, alongside descriptions of prophecy and mythic figures, even in those sections where the author is focusing on Israel. Twice the author places Israel in unbearable situations, and in both instances, the crisis is not the result of physical duress—whether cumulative or all at once—but because it places believers in a religiously impossible situation. The first crisis that Israel faces is precipitated by Armilus's successful performance of three wonders and his messianic pretensions. The second crisis results from the killing of Messiah ben Joseph. The reaction is identical in both instances: flight to the wilderness, prayer, and weeping until God responds.¹¹³

In this section, like in other visions (and according to the hypothesized reconstruction based on QD, in the opening chapter as well), the genre of 'divine revelation' ('epiphany,' 'theophany') appears; God reveals Himself directly through miraculous acts and becomes part of the narrative. God manifests in opposition to the mythical figures of the messiah's enemies, despite the **terrestrial** setting remaining unchanged. God's manifestation is described by the scriptural expression "El Hai" ("the Living God"; Joshua 3:10, Ps 42:3 and 84:3, and Hos 2:1), providing a consistent rhythm and quasi-lyrical framework to explain what is happening behind the scenes of the revealed events. The expression appears seven times in the redemption section of the Vision. Alongside this, the author twice employs a Rabbinic Hebrew name for God: "HKBH" (*"Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu"*; "The Holy One, blessed is He").

The term "the Living God" appears three times in the second chapter of the Vision, in response to the two calamities that brought Israel to despair: "And the Living God will send a righteous man from the children of Ephraim ... And the Living God will answer them: My people! Do not fear him ... And the Living God will bring down food for them from the heavens ..." (2b, 19, 2:12; 3a, 9–10, 2:15; 3a, 18, 2:18). The purpose of this revelation is to contend with the enemies of the redeemer and with the troubles faced by the true believers of Israel; nothing else can comfort and assuage those who face these troubles.

Setting

In contrast to what survived from the first part of the Vision, the historical section, where the actors are human and the events described are the outcomes of their actions—the policies of rulers and their consequences—the second part, which deals with the difficult birth pangs of the messiah, the appearance of enemies, and

113 For an extended treatment of this, see below, 5.3.

the suffering of the persecuted in general and the people of Israel in particular, involves mythic forces and wondrous deeds. Even in this section, the Vision's events continue to unfold in the earthly arena, in places familiar to readers; these are the same places where the first part of the apocalypse occurred. These places are recognizable to readers of the Bible, and it is likely that the readers had unmediated knowledge of them, as they were residents of the region. The sites where events occur are: Babylon, Jerusalem [= the Holy Place], the wildernesses of Paran [= in QD, the "wilderness of Ephraim"], and Judah. The spaces in the background, from which malevolent forces arrive and to which those escaping from their oppressors flee, encompass the entire world: all the cardinal directions and the ends of the earth. This setting of the events will not change even in the third chapter, the chapter of complete redemption.

Among the features of the chaos prevailing in the camp of Armilus are a variety of lifestyles, including sexual immorality. Scripture relates to this in describing the punishment of false prophets: "Because they have committed baseness in Israel, and have **committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors**, and have spoken in My name false words, which I had not commanded them; I am He Who knows and bears witness—says the Lord" (Jer 29:23). This is also addressed in the Talmud (*b Sanh.* 93a), which dramatizes the story of Ahab ben Kolaiah and Zedekiah ben Maaseiah, the false prophets to whom Jeremiah's prophecy refers:

Thus said the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who prophesy falsely to you in My name: I am going to deliver them into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and he shall put them to death before your eyes. And of them shall be taken a curse by all the captivity of Judah who are in Babylonia, saying: 'May the Lord make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylonia toasted in the fire.' Because they have committed baseness in Israel, and have committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors ... (Jer 29:21–23).

What did they do? They went to the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Ahab said to her: "So says the Lord: 'Submit to Zedekiah [sexually].'" And Zedekiah said to her: "So says the Lord: 'Submit to Ahab [sexually].'" She went and told her father. He said to her: "The God of these people abhors lewdness; when they come to you, send them to me."

This matter, the disruption of societal norms, including the corruption of sexual mores, also appears in QD, in a context similar to the Vision of Daniel:

Then some other people will come and help them, and their habits will be most different from [the habits of] the whole world. They will go to one another's wife, and after they have done [so], they will make [the matter] known themselves. They will kill people, and they will go to Damascus, to that wicked-one, who will say: "I am he." [And] they will believe in him. (QD §41)

This detail is part of descriptions that also appear in Christian and Islamic apocalyptic writings.¹¹⁴

Although this section deals with the first stage of the era of redemption—the birth pangs of the two messiahs as they struggle against their adversaries—it has a specific temporal setting. The author demarcates this stage with two ‘dates’ that lack any committed definition. The commencement of this difficult period is marked by the event that triggers it: “After all of these, the Daughter of Levi will become pregnant ... the Ishmaelites will be killed before [the Son of the Daughter of Levi goes forth], and those who remain will flee to the wilderness of Paran. The Son of the Daughter of Levi will grow stronger, and all the Northerners along with him” (2a, 4–8, 2:2). The opening stage of the messianic birth pangs in various apocalyptic writings is the arrival of the enemies of the messiah, including Gog and Magog from the **Northern Gates**. In these works, the rebellion of the “Northerners” under the leadership of the messiah’s enemy marks the beginning of the second, apocalyptic part of the birth pangs of the messiah, which precedes the complete redemption. Other works describe a rebellion of nations that threaten the civilized world as the manifestation of the final rebellion. The opening of the Northern Gates corresponds to traditions found in the Alexander Romance (sixth century CE), where it is narrated that Alexander the Great, of the fourth century BCE, built these gates to prevent the entry of enemies who threaten the world. The breach of these gates serves as a date from which we can determine when seventh century apocalyptic works were composed. For example, the Syriac Daniel (henceforth SyrD), just after the detailed description of the messiah’s enemies, the Son of the Daughter of Levi, and the Antichrist, states: “Then the Northern Gates will be opened before him.”¹¹⁵

Though the Vision does not mention gates or their breach, the section on the messianic birth pangs begins with enemies coming from the north, as in SyrD.

¹¹⁴ DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 63, draws attention to the Chronicles of Jerahmeel, and the tale of Susanna (§65) was inserted into the Daniel story between the tale of the false and adulterous prophets Ahab and Zedekiah (§64; cf. Jer 29:21–23) and the episode of Nebuchadnezzar’s madness (§66). In n. 85, DiTommaso notes that “the Hebrew translation of Daniel precedes the story of Ahab and Zedekiah”; see DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 63, §§63–66.

The topic recurs in Muslim apocalypses. See Cook, *Studies*, 13–14, 185, 245, 333, 337, 341–342, and 350; some texts even take these relations to the extreme of permitting male and female homosexual relations. Nu’aym, *Tribulations*, 400, §§1102, 1549–1760, from Abū Hurayra: “The Hour will not rise until the people screw each other on the roads, just as mounts screw, with the men only needing men and the women women – do you know what lesbianism (tasāḥuq) is?” They said: “No.” He said: “When a woman mounts a woman, then she rubs her (tasāḥuḥā).”

¹¹⁵ Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 11–22, 92–93; DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 74–75, 86, 470.

Here, the author of the Vision begins the second part and mentions the “Northerners” who arrive together with the messiah’s enemy, perhaps influenced by earlier sources that described in greater detail the turning point happening in the north. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that in the second section, which describes the camp of the Son of the Daughter of Levi, even before Gog and Magog join the camp, the camp is described as follows: “And with him will be all Northerners, and the Easterners and Westerners as well” (2a, 19, 2:3). Only the Southerners and some Muslims will flee from him. It is possible, therefore, that the initial mention of the “Northerners” is merely shorthand for the entire camp, arriving from all corners of the world and the ends of the earth, much as they are described elsewhere in the Vision. As such, it does not mean or even allude to the Northern Gates of other apocalypses.

The sequence of events is rhythmic here as well, and this part of the Vision is characterized by recurring movement: the movement of pursuers, fugitives, and returnees to their place of origin. The pursuers and their allies are the Son of the Daughter of Levi and his camp, which includes Gog and Magog, and Armilus with his faithful followers and his camps. The fugitives include all the peoples of the world, the Ishmaelites, the Southerners, and the main focus of attention, the remnant of Israel. Some of those who scattered in all directions return to the places from which they fled. This movement recurs **six** times in the chronological sequence of the messianic birth pangs. The pursuit, escape, and return take place in Babylonia, Jerusalem [= the Holy Place], the wildernesses of Paran and Judah, and other undefined corners of the world.

This great movement has no clear temporal framework, but in one of its stages, during the despair that follows the death of Messiah ben Joseph, forty days and forty nights of weeping and prayer in the wilderness of Judah are counted. The period of the messianic birth pangs concludes with another time frame, this one optimistic thanks to the possibility of shortening the days of persecution: “And for them a month will be like a week, a week like a day, and a day like an hour” (3a, 19–20, 2:19).

This part of the Vision expresses instability, insecurity, and fear by two means: through the fearsome images of the persecutors and their camps, and through the incessant movement of the various camps described. The suffering is first described as something worldwide, but as the description progresses, it focuses on the Jewish people and its messianic leaders.

Intention

The aim of the second chapter is to connect the Vision to the conventional patterns of earlier apocalyptic works, from the biblical Book of Daniel onward, thereby

accruing more authority to the work. This linkage to established patterns from other apocalyptic visions enables a return to the expectations arising from other authoritative texts and apocalypses concerning how the world operates according to a divine plan. It incidentally serves to strengthen the faithful in their religious convictions. This linkage, in the form of imagery, is meant to implant in those who face momentous events the faith that the redemption—in the present case, the redemption of Israel—will eventually occur. The description of the enemies of the messiah and the distress and oppression that they bring in their wake comport with elements found in other apocalyptic writings, and their ultimate purpose is analogous.

The time of composition of the work is one of significant and far-reaching changes in the world, and its mythic descriptions are identified with them. In this chapter of the Vision, there are no changes in the functioning of the natural world other than the form of the messiah's enemies, the limited miracles performed by Armilus, and the provision of food by God. The wars, persecutions, flight, and return can be connected to experiences undergone by the author's contemporaries in the war zones of northern Syria, Iraq, and Byzantium during historical events. The author of the vision adds credibility by describing the events and the accompanying sense of distress. Like the rulers who had already ruled, if troubles that had already occurred had been foreseen in all their detail, it should reinforce the readers' faith that these are part of the master plan of the redemption that awaits on a distinct horizon. The author does not abandon the linear continuity of the Vision to issue any call to believers; rather, the message arises from the sequence of descriptions and by way of the praise given to those who adhere to their faith. God's response during the period of tribulations is a sign of what is to come, and this sign brings a measure of comfort to the suffering.

According to these visions and their ancient authoritative sources, the parties responsible for the tribulations and challenges are the mass of hostile nations, which, through military might, managed to achieve positions of power in the world. But they are led by powerful mythological foes. The prototype of these mythical leaders are Gog and Magog (Ezek 38–39), which appear in traditions of every religion as tormentors exacerbating the persecution of the oppressed. In most Jewish apocalyptic works, no external description of them appears. Only in the Vision and in QD are they described as having two sets of eyes—two on their foreheads and two at the back. Additionally, only in these and in Christian and Islamic sources are there distinctive descriptions of the eyes of Gog and Magog.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Perhaps this stems from a mistaken understanding of Ezekiel 38:16: “so that the nations know Me when I manifest My holiness through you **before their eyes**, Gog.” [I have not found a basis for

Alongside and in addition to Gog and Magog, another mythological figure with a fearsome and satanic visage, an enemy of the redeemer, is described in apocalyptic sources. At times, this figure is portrayed as monstrous and non-human. This character is given various names in the writings of the three major religions, including Antichrist, Armilus, al-Sufyānī, and al-Dajjāl. The battles against this adversary and its ultimate defeat herald the onset of salvation and the end of days.¹¹⁷

This sense of pressure was likely palpable for the author of the Vision and its readers against the backdrop of wars and experience, the legacy of the wars of their time (the 940s, as discussed above and below). The presence of this military legacy lends credibility to the words of the Vision at the beginning of this chapter: “the Ishmaelites will be killed beforehand, and those who remain will flee to the wilderness of Paran” (2a, 6, 2:1). The events foreseen in the Vision are based on a description of the sense of pressure and the legacy of warfare. They herald the beginning of the messianic birth pangs with the arrival of the first enemy of the messiah, the mythical figure that the Vision calls the Son of the Daughter of Levi. From this part of the Vision onwards, the writer transitions to the apocalyptic section, nothing of which has yet been realized.

The harsh depiction of the enemies at the outset is accompanied by the promise of several temporary rescues by God. In this chapter of the Vision, several assurances are given—the destruction of the camp of the Son of the Daughter of Levi and Gog and Magog, the arrival of Messiah ben Joseph, and the sustenance of the fugitives. These are to strengthen the faith of believers, navigate them through the birth pangs of the messiah, instill hope in them—despite the religious and physical pressures anticipated from Armilus and his camp—lead them to the transitional period, and outline in detail the complete redemption of the third part of the Vision.

any such tradition in any *targumim*, including Syriac translations.] On the distinctive descriptions of the eyes, see Emeri van Donzel and Andrea Schmidt, *Gog and Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 65–68; Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 93.

In several early apocalyptic works, the antichrist is described as having two pupils in each eye; see James Cooper and Arthur John Maclean, *The Testament of the Lord, Translated into English from the Syriac with Introduction and Notes* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 57–58: “And these are his signs: his head is like a fiery coal, his right eye shot with blood, his left eye blue, and he has two pupils.” See also: Henze, *Daniel*, 91, n. 27.

¹¹⁷ On satanic figures in Rabbinic literature, see below, ch. 4, 115–119, 127–132. On the Antichrist, see below, ch. 4.3.3. On al-Sufyānī and al-Dajjāl, see below, 100–108, 118–119.

2.2.3 The Redemption

Detailed Structure

A. The Destruction of Remaining Enemies

- a. Messiah ben Joseph fights Armilus and his camp
- b. The remaining enemies destroy one another
- c. The Splitting of the Mount of Olives and the appearance of the rescuers: Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and Elijah
- d. Messiah ben David incinerates the enemies

B. Healing the People and Repairing the World

- a. Ingathering of exiles and resurrection of the dead
- b. The rebuilt Jerusalem descends
- c. The patriarchs, Abraham and Moses, arrive in Jerusalem

C. The Messianic Era

- a. Eternal life
- b. The Banquet of the Messiah
- c. The return of the priesthood and Temple service

D. Conclusion of the Vision

- a. Daniel's joy
- b. The angel is revealed
- c. The charge of Jeremiah, Elijah, and Zerubbabel to write down the Vision
- d. The Vision is revealed to Ezra and Israel
- e. The conclusion of the Vision

Genre

The redemption is a four-stage narrative of revelation (theophany/epiphany), incorporating the various actions of several messianic figures. The revelation begins with a mention of the “Living God,” like the two divine interventions in the second part of the Vision. True to his overall conception, the author portrays God as the agent of changes in nature and history. In this wider context, the actions of traditional redemptive figures are described: Messiah ben Joseph, Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and Elijah. They are joined in the later stages of the unfolding plot by Abraham, Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezra.

Stage 1: “And the Living God will remember Israel and redeem them from the hand of the enemy. The Holy One, blessed be He, will give permission to Messiah ben Joseph” (3a, 20, 3:1). Here, God saves Messiah ben Joseph and enables his military action.

Stage 2: There is still war at this stage. “And the Living God will remember Israel, and a great darkness will come ... and He will shine a light upon Israel ...

And the Holy One, blessed be He, will watch over them from the heavens and have mercy on them” (3b, 3, 3:4). God continues the battle against Israel’s enemies. Its continuation entails God’s appearance on the Mount of Olives, the splitting of the mountain, and the appearance of the salvific figures on the mountain.

In this stage, the messiah decisively wins the battle. This time it is Messiah ben Jesse, who kills with the breath of his lips (“And the son of Jesse will burn all the wicked ones with the breath of his lips,” 3b, 7–8, 3:5), clearing the path for the full realization of the redemption: the ingathering of exiles by Zerubbabel and the resurrection of the dead by Messiah ben Jesse.

Stage 3: “And God will lower Jerusalem, already built” (3b, 16, 3:7). Once the enemies are eliminated, the dead have been resurrected, and the exiles gathered in, the stage is set for a restoration of religious worship. Jerusalem resumes its place, and the nation’s forebears return to their stature.

Stage 4: “And the Living God will bring down the manna for them, as of yore: Death will be swallowed up forever” (3b, 23, 3:9). The final stage is the future banquet of the righteous, featuring the Leviathan, Behemoth, and Ziz, followed by the restoration of the priests to their service and the Levites to their song.

Setting

The third part focuses on the scene of redemption, and as such, in the Jewish tradition, it must take place in the earthly arena—in Jerusalem. In the vision, Jerusalem expands and rises higher, standing atop four mountains—Tabor, Carmel, Hermon, and the Mount of Olives (3b, 15–16, 3:7). This part begins at the end of the period of the messianic birth pangs of the messiah, with the arrival of Armilus, who gathers his believers, including Jews who were misled into believing in him as the messiah, and leads them to the “Holy Place.” In this, the vision is similar to several Christian traditions in which the Antichrist goes to Jerusalem, sits in the Temple, and pretends to be the savior, ensnaring many believers, including coreligionists of the authors of apocalyptic texts. In this section, Messiah ben Joseph is given permission to kill Armilus, the Son of the Female Figure, along with the encampment that has gathered to him from the ends of the earth. Since they all come to Jerusalem, the battle will begin there and continue wherever enemies are found.¹¹⁸

As the battle ends, the author returns his attention to the intricacies of the redemption in Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, the miracle of the water flowing from beneath the Sanctuary [= the Temple or the site of the mosques on the Temple

¹¹⁸ This motif appears in Pseudo-Methodius and its descendants. See Garstad, *Pseudo-Methodius*, 133, 137.

Mount] was already depicted in the second part of the vision, when the faithful of Israel fled to the wilderness. Armilus and his camps arrive in Jerusalem and are defeated there, and it is there that the ultimate redemption takes place. The epiphany within this redemption lies in the joining of the celestial and earthly realms, as the supernal Jerusalem, already built, is lowered by chain to the tops of four mountains. In other traditions, the Temple descends from heaven; the Vision of Daniel is unique in that **the Temple is absent** from the description of the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem and the renewal of cultic worship in the city.¹¹⁹

Intention

Historical apocalyptic works are directed towards their final section, the redemption. As in many such works, here too, redemption is not contingent on repentance, prayer, or the actions of the remnant of Israel. Rather, redemption arrives when the designated processes and allotted times for its advent are completed. Its time is the end of days, and the processes that must be completed are the same ones that recur in apocalyptic literature: the destruction of the Temple, the dispersion of the people, the appearance of messianic adversaries, the struggle of the messiahs against them, the flight of the faithful to the wilderness, the appearance of the messiahs, the completion of the war against the enemies, the ingathering of the exiles, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the construction of the Temple.

The author's aim is to explain that the human events depicted in the composition are part of a divine, global, and cosmic plan. The wars are interpreted as part of a divine mission, and success and failure attest to the status of the responsible parties within the higher worlds. With such an explanation, the author can instill hope in the hearts of victims of persecution whose faith wavers. This is achieved throughout the composition by establishing the authority of the author as a prophet who foresaw events unfolding exactly as described, especially during the age of messianic birth pangs. Knowledge of the completion of redemption, as envisioned in the more optimistic prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, can assuage readers and reinforce their faith amidst doubts that arise during wars between empires, the suffering of those residing in conflict zones, and the rise of Christian

¹¹⁹ The Book of Zerubbabel states: "The Temple was built on the peaks of five mountains which the Lord had chosen to support His sanctuary: Lebanon, Mount Moriah, Tabor, Carmel, and Hermon." Reeves notes that this is "based on Isaiah 2:2, as interpreted in *Midrash Tehillim* 68:9, although the latter source names only four peaks (Tabor, Carmel, Sinai, and Zion). *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana* 21:4 (and *Midrash Tehillim* 87:2 – EF) lists only three peaks: Sinai, Tabor, and Carmel." See Reeves, *Trajectories*, 64, and the further references cited there in n. 173. The unique absence of the Temple in the Vision will be addressed below, ch. 5.2.

and Muslim apocalyptic literature. The Jewish reader is provided with a comprehensive interpretation of contemporary events, all framed by the era in which this apocalyptic work was redacted and resealed: the rise of the 'Abbāsid Empire, the wars between the Caliphate and Byzantium, and the emergence of the Fatimids.

Alongside these, there is preparation for future events, such as the appearance of the messiah's enemies, including the potential second coming of Jesus. This interpretation draws on the language of the sources and Jewish traditions about the messianic plans, adapted as needed. The combination of these elements serves as a response to the prevailing trends of the author's time and place. It offers readers a complete Jewish understanding of what is happening and being written nearby, and a robust response to the rumors reaching them from afar.

3 The *Ex-Eventu* Prophetic-Historical Sections of the Vision of Daniel

The historical sections that portray events close to the time of writing of apocalyptic visions constitute the first goal of their discussion, and some give these visions the authority of historical documents thanks to these sections. These sections are ripe for comparison to historical documents and subjects that have already undergone academic study. The historical sections of the visions also serve as an anchor for determining the time of composition of the apocalyptic visions and a window to understanding the mood of a specific era.

The Vision of Daniel contains a detailed list of named rulers, including the duration and features of the reign of each ruler. An analysis of this list reveals when the main part of the Vision was written. Given our claim about the similarities between the Vision of Daniel and QD, a close study of the list of rulers, one by one, will compare each entry in the Vision with the parallel entry in QD. This will enable a critical examination of the claim that the two works are connected as well as a necessary study of the historical events that occurred close to the time of composition (without returning to discuss them a second time).

3.1 The Vision of Daniel and Qışsa-ye Dāniyāl (QD)

The vision of the future¹²⁰ that begins with a list of rulers constitutes a return to the pattern established in the visions of the biblical Book of Daniel chapters 7 and 11.¹²¹ The Vision of Daniel is easier to read than most other visions, because its author details each ruler by number, name, years of activity, and deeds. The discovery and publication of The Vision, along with its connection to Daniel's story, enable a new and updated interpretation of QD.

Not all the descriptions of the rulers in the Vision of Daniel fit the known historical facts about the duration and features of their reigns. For instance, Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik was the **seventh** Umayyad caliph and the **eleventh** caliph after Muḥammad. He reigned for two years (715–717), not ten. Here, however, he is listed as the **tenth** caliph.

¹²⁰ Parts of this section draw on and extend my earlier formulation; see Ben-Sasson, “The Vision of Daniel,” 336–340.

¹²¹ Segal, *Daniel*, 52–54, 133, and see below, 85–86, 98–100, regarding the “He-Goat.”

There are several ways to account for this discrepancy. For one, some Syrian and Syrian-influenced apocalypses and histories do not list Ali as even having been a caliph. Another possibility to consider is that Sulaymān is called the tenth because Mu‘āwiya II, Yazid’s son, who died as a child, is omitted from this list, though he is included in other official lists.¹²²

The brief description in the Vision can fit with his reign, which is characterized by military campaigns in the east and west, against various powers, including the Byzantine Empire, Jurjān, and Ṭabaristān, which were then part of the Persian sphere. Yet the number of years and the description of his deeds fit better with the tenth caliph, Sulaymān’s brother, al-Walīd I, and “head to the sages” is a more apt description of their father, ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (685–705), who was considered a learned ruler.

The two sources, the Vision of Daniel and QD, are juxtaposed below according to the order of rulers, to illustrate the connection between them.

The Vision of Daniel	Qīṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl [=QD]
I. The prophetic-historical parts ‘from the past’ (<i>vaticinium ex eventu</i>)	
1. The Umayyad Caliphs	
X. Sulaymān. A great commotion will be in the East and in the West, and the king of Babylon will reign and be a head to the sages, and the king of the West will die in his days. His reign will last for 10 years.	After him, another will arise. He will come from the East to the West and ensnare the whole world. He will act benevolently toward people, and he will rule the whole world for 10 years and 5 days, and he will die.
In QD, he is the tenth ruler after Muḥammad but described similarly.	
XI. ‘Umar. In his days will be peace in the world and serenity among people. And he will reign 3 years.	After him will arise another from Babylon, and there will be peace among people. He will be benevolent to the Israelites. He will reign for 13 years, and he will die.
‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (717–720) had a reputation for pleasantness and mercy. Despite the brevity of his reign, Islamic tradition considers him one of the best Muslim caliphs, second only to the first four caliphs. It is possible that the mention of ‘13 years’ in QD should actually be read as ‘3 years.’ The consonant ‘y’ is very common in Persian as a grammatical element, and therefore the Hebrew character “y” (<i>yod</i>), which also represents the number 10, appears frequently in Judeo-Persian. This generates some ambiguity about the word in question, which can be understood as 3 or 13.	

¹²² Cook, *Studies*, 37–38; see also Clifford E. Bosworth, “Mu‘āwiya II,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Peri J. Bearman et al., https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_5280, accessed May 2, 2025.

(continued)

XII. Yazīd. A wolf of the desert he will be, robbing people, and then he will die; he will reign 8 years and 2 months.

Another will then arise. He will build mosques and their minarets, and people will worship 5 times each day. He will claim prophecy, and he will call people before him. He will reign for one year and two months, and he will die.

There is some confusion about the period from 720 to 754 (until the reign of Abū D̲j̲a'far), during which five Umayyad caliphs and the first 'Abbāsīd caliph reigned, all of which is telescoped into the reign of Yazīd. As we will see, the description of Abū D̲j̲a'far's reign is also corrupted and was copied twice. Perhaps the copyist had a version that included most (assuming that some of the caliphs with shorter reigns were never part of the list) of the rulers of this period, but the beginning of the Hebrew spelling of Yazīd (יזיד), which also corresponds to the number XVII (יז in Hebrew), led him to erroneously skip to the reign of Abū D̲j̲a'far, who was the seventeenth ruler on the original list. Alternatively, it is possible that the copyist skipped from one Yazīd to another, as there were three dominant rulers with that name during this period. None of them clearly fits the above description. Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik, or Yazīd II (720–724), was a cousin and successor of 'Umar, so his reign is chronologically compatible with the previous part of the list. In his era, there was a series of military rebellions that were cruelly repressed. The civil war against the 'Abbāsīds also began in his time. The descriptions of this ruler are entirely different in the two works; the one in the Vision is more apt, though the duration of his reign does not fit. Perhaps the copyist mistook 4 (ד) or 5 (ה) for 8 (ח). The QD version, where this ruler claims prophecy, seems more like al-Walīd II.

Yazīd III [744], who was known as Yazīd al-Naqis because he cut people's allowances, fits well with the idea of "robbing people". This confusion between the three makes the description in this section unclear.

This point of the Vision reflects the end of twelve kings, the change from Umayyads to the 'Abbāsīds, and might be the end of the first source used by the composer of the Vision. His editorial work, reflected in the problematic transition from the reign of Yazīd to the reign of Abū D̲j̲a'far, could indicate that the latter originated in a different source.

XIII a. Then will reign Abū D̲j̲a'far. A great sage with strong opinions he will be; like a wolf, he robs and hoards much gold and silver, leaving nothing for people who seek bread and find none for he will leave nothing in their hands; they will offer animals for sale but there will be no buyer; he will bury silver vessels in hiding places And it will be revealed to the Ishmaelites in their salvation. He will be a great sage, a reader of books. He will go to pray at the temple of his mistake[n religion] and die on the way. And his reign will be 22 years, whereupon he will give away his ring so that it will not be left in the hands of the members of his house

After him, another will arise, and he will be wise; silver and gold will accumulate, people will have happiness, and there will be peace throughout the world. He will be benevolent to the Israelites. He will die in his [astrological] house/time, and he will reign for 3 and a half years.

(continued)

XVII [XIV?], b. and those who remain seek, but there is nothing, for he will leave nothing in their hands; they will offer animals for sale, but there will be no buyer, for lack of money in their hands. He will hoard silver and gold and bury it in hiding places; and in the future it will be revealed to people in their salvation and he will be a great sage and a reader of books, and he will ask and seek and demand wisdom; and he will go to celebrate at the temple of his mistake[n religion] and die on the way. And his reign will be 22 years, whereupon he will give his ring to the members of his household.

Abū D̡jaʿfar al-Manṣūr is mentioned with his common name, not his regal name (al-Manṣūr), as others are. This is likely an allusion to his low birth; his mother, Sallāma, was deemed Berber slave girl. The reign of Abū D̡jaʿfar is discussed in greater detail below, ch. 3.2.1. Concerning the duplication of the description of his reign, see below, 94–97.

[XIV] After him will reign Maḥdī, his son. He will be wise, and a lover of harlotry he will be; he will profli-
gately spend silver and gold in the world. There will
be peace, and falsehood will proliferate in the world.
He will go to the land of the East and die there, and
his reign will last 10 years.

And his son will succeed him [to the throne].
He will be wise and will know God. He will
profligately spend silver and gold for people,
and there will be justice and uprightness in
the world. He will be inclined to kindness for
the Israelites. He will go to the East and die
there, and his reign will be 10 years.

Abū ʿabd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿabd Allāh al-Manṣūr (775–785), who was called al-Maḥdī, was known as a lover of erotic poetry and music. During his reign, poets received generous patronage. His generosity was likened to “waves of charity,” and he squandered huge sums from the royal treasury, left full by Abū D̡jaʿfar. The two versions are similar and fit both al-Maḥdī’s character and the duration of his reign. In 785, he was poisoned to death in Baghdad by one of his concubines.

[XV] And after him will reign Mūsā, his youngest
son; he will be fluid of mind and his desire will be to
destroy the world. His reign will be one year and five
days.

And his son will succeed him to the throne.
He will be melancholic, insane, and ascetic,
and he will want to destroy the world. He
will reign for one year and 5 months, and he
will die.

Abu Muḥammad Mūsā ibn Maḥdī al-Hādī, the fourth ʿAbbāsīd caliph, ruled in Baghdad for one year, from 785–786. According to tradition, he attempted to poison his mother; perhaps this is why both versions deem him insane. The versions are almost similar.

(continued)

[XVI] And after him will reign Hārūn his son; he will be a roaring lion and a harsh judge who upholds his designs and kills all the officers of the land and the sons of Ishmael; his desire will be to destroy the world in its entirety, and all his days he will shed blood. He will judge with truth, and he will rove and wander from East to West and from West to East: And he will capture cities and towns from the King of Edom and take a great many captives from them, and he will return to his place in peace. And a man from the East will rise against him and stir up the whole world against him all day long. He will shed blood, but not by his own deed [?]. He will call them heretics and pursue the people of the East but not overtake them. He will divide his kingdom in his lifetime among his three sons: Muḥammad in Babylon, the West to Qāsim and the East to Ma'mūn: And he will die in exile, and his reign will be 23 years.

And his son will succeed him to the throne, and he will persecute and kill Ishmaelites. He will want to bring every man under his lordship. Misery will visit people, and he will come from the East and the West to wage war and shed blood. He will reside in Babylon. He will then go to Rome and battle the Romans, and for the people there will be tumult in the world. There will be misery, and he will return from Rome and go to the East. There he will wage wars and there he will reside. He will reign for 23 years, and he will die in the East. He will have three sons: One will go to the East, one to the West, and one to Babylon. There will not be a lone king.

It is astonishing that Hārūn is described as wanting to destroy the world and kill the Muslims (Ishmaelites), since usually Hārūn is portrayed so positively. There must be some unknown backstory. Otherwise, both versions of the detailed description of his reign fit the historical figure and the duration of his reign.

[XVII] After him will reign Muḥammad his son [=Al-'Amīn]; he will be wicked in deed but generous, and in his day everybody will earn a living. And in his day tumult and sword will dwell among brothers [Al-'Amīn and Al-Ma'mūn]. And his brother [= Al-'Amīn] will send against him a great general [= 'Alī ibn 'Īsā], he and his sons and brothers [= abnā' al-dawla] will abuse each other [= with Tāhir ibn Ḥusayn, Al-Ma'mūn's commander], and both will kill many soldiers:

And the one who will be in Babylon—shall not reign [=Qāsim];
And the one who will be in the East [=Al-Ma'mūn from Khurasan]—there will be tumult; he will go to the West [Baghdad], and he will conquer the West from his brother [=Al-'Amīn].
There will be much bloodshed, and he will die [=Al-'Amīn]

Al-'Amīn Abū Mūsā Muḥammad b. Hārūn (809–813) succeeded his father, Hārūn.

The vision describes the war first on its eastern side, in the Ray region, the battle between 'Alī ibn 'Īsā ibn Māhān (Al-'Amīn's camp) and Tāhir ibn Ḥusayn (Al-Ma'mūn's camp) and then in Baghdad. QD refers only to the second phase of the campaign, which took place when Al-Ma'mūn and his loyalists, led by Tāhir, arrived in Baghdad from the east.

In that campaign, Al-'Amīn was killed. The Vision completes the section on the death of Al-'Amīn in the next section, describing the era of Al-Ma'mūn, with the number of years of Al-'Amīn's reign. In describing the relationship between Hārūn al-Raṣhīd sons, our updated identification is offered in the body of the source, due to the intensive use of general pronouns, to help follow the sequence of events of war and succession.

(continued)

[XVIII] His spurned brother [= Al-Ma'mūn] will come to the country of Babylon and wage war with him [=Al-'Amīn]. He [= Al-Ma'mūn] will kill his brother [=Al-'Amīn], loot much, and plunder his treasures. His reign [=Al-'Amīn] will be 4 years and 6 months. After him, his brother [=Al-Ma'mūn] will reign in his place:

Then another [= Al-Ma'mūn] will arise after him [=Al-'Amīn]. He [= Al-Ma'mūn, in the context of his promise to 'Alī al-Riḏā] will order the wearing of white clothes, and he will remove black clothes from the world. He will conquer the West, and the turmoil will be great. There will be bloodshed, and they will kill many Arabs, and people will travel from city to city. The Israelites will be persecuted, and he [= Al-Ma'mūn] will reign 20 years, and he will die.

The reign of Abū al-'Abbās 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn al-Ma'mūn (813–833) began with a struggle between him ("the spurned") and his brother (Al-'Amīn) over Al-'Amīn's refusal to accept the Treaty of Mecca (802), which determined the succession after Hārūn al-Rashīd. The struggle ended with the killing of Al-'Amīn, after Al-'Amīn had ruled for four and a half years, and the accession of Al-Ma'mūn whose initials are deposed and finally declared to the throne of the caliph (he would reign in his place). The Vision does not specify how many years Al-Ma'mūn ruled, nor do the 'Abbāsīd rulers who followed him. His twenty-year reign, as the version of QD indicates, is notable for the flourishing of science and culture and the construction of buildings for those engaged in these activities. The mention of the changing of the color of the clothes hints at the assurance of power to the Shiite Imam 'Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḏā. (See 98–99, below).

[XIX] And after him will reign an officer from his family, Muḥammad by name, and people will change his name. God will bring success to his kingdom, and his enemies will be given in his hands; he will strike and stir up Hindustan [?], and they will bring him much money from everywhere. And the land will be desolate, and he will die. In his life he will change many things in his kingdom, and he will love building; all his days he will be involved in building:

Then another will arise. He, too, will come from the West and go to the East, and he will wage war against the people of the East. People will face difficulties, and he will kill ministers and governors. Then he will wage war against the king of Babylon. He will fight the kings of the West, and there will be much bloodshed. They will wear white clothes; in all the world will be distress, and all these people will rule capriciously. [The world] will be [divided into] districts.

Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd, Al-Mu'taṣim bi'llāh. He was Al-Ma'mūn's half-brother. Rebellions and wars in the East and West marked Al-Mu'taṣim's reign (833–842). His great successes in battles against Byzantium provided a platform for messianic expectations and eschatological writing. This awakening also serves as a platform for the development of expectations during the reign of his son, Al-Wāthiq, in view of the rise of a messianic movement with ties to the Umayyad dynasty in Syria.

These campaigns are described in both visions. The Vision describes Al-Mu'taṣim's occupation with building and is directed at building the city of Samarra. QD describes his arrival from Egypt, the campaigns with Byzantium, and the removal of 'Abbās, the son of Al-Ma'mūn, in the campaign in Baghdad.

(continued)

[XX] After him, another king from the East will come with a large force and will reach the country of Babylon. He will capture it and shed much blood. And from there he will go to the West, and against him will stand the He-Goat whose name is Ẓafini/Ẓufyani and they will both do battle, And he will kill the He-Goat, and the Easterner will come to Egypt, and lay it waste. He will shed an inestimable amount of blood therein. And he will turn back and come to Damascus and shed blood in it like water.

Then will arise a king from among the Romans, dressed in red clothes. He will advance until Damascus and will wage wars. And he will kill the great ones of Ishmael, their most honored, and their kings, and the kingship will pass from the Ishmaelites. He will destroy the mosques and smash their minarets, and no one will ever again call in the name of the disqualified one. He will eradicate the kingdom of Ishmael; it will never rise again. The rest of the people will be under his protection and will obey him all the days of his life. And anyone who disobeys him will be killed. Troubles and difficulties will come upon the Israelites. He will forbid circumcision and the Sabbath, and he will not allow the reading of the Torah or the recitation of prayer. He will put many Israelites to death; fortunate is the Israelite who will hold on to his Israelite ways at that time and they who disobey these [decrees]. After this trouble that will befall the Israelites, all the Israelites will gather and repent. And at that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, will send them His redemption. And he who will have conquered the whole world, he will rule for 9 months, and he will die.

Abū Jaʿfar Hārūn ibn Muḥammad Al-Wāthiq (842–847), like his father, arrived in Baghdad from Samarra. The Vision hints at some of the campaigns he had to face: two rebellions in Baghdad, which were suppressed with great force and at a heavy cost in blood (in 843 and 846); a campaign against Armenia, greater Syria; and the reviving of the Miḥna (an inquisition against heretics) in Egypt, the purpose of which was to persecute those who did not adopt the proper theology. He killed the rebel Abū Ḥarb Tamīm known as al-Mubarkāʾ (“the Veiled One”; he covered his face so he would not be recognized) in Syria (Al-Sufyānī), and attacked Damascus. At that time, the Emperor Theophilus (the He-Goat) died, whether these are two different figures or a double name for one of them. According to the current version of the Vision, it is a double designation for **one** of them (Theophilus or Abū Ḥarb Tamīm, the confrontation with Theophilus is more appropriate to consider the event leading up to the redemption). Or perhaps the word order in the description was wrong and the He-Goat belongs at the bloodshed at end of the verse, as follows: “And he [=Al-Wāthiq] will turn back and come to Damascus <and against him will stand the He-Goat whose name is Ẓafini/Ẓufyani> and shed blood in it like water” and then, **two** different characters, Abū Ḥarb Tamīm and Theophilus, are described. Both crises came to an end in the 840s.

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QD can be interpreted in relation to those events. The Roman (Greek) king wears red, who is Theophilus, and the battles he fought against the 'Abbāsids, first against Al-Mu'taṣim and then against Al-Wāthiq.

The red garment may refer to the biblical tradition that identifies a red garment with someone who is involved in a bloody war, where the words originally are attributed to God in the days of redemption at the End Times (Isaiah 63:1). In *b. Makkot* (12a) of the Talmud, the verse is attributed in a loanword to the **Angel of Rome**. Previous works referred to the conquests of Nikephoros II Phokas and John I Tzimiskes, and especially to the events of 976, pointing to the name of the Byzantine emperor of Armenian origin, Tzimiskes (in Armenian Cimsikik). This name derives from the Armenian word *camusk*, which refers to a type of shoe and, according to one view, specifically red shoes. It should further be noted that red is associated with Rome and Christianity in Hebrew sources (purple was the color of the emperor's robes).

Al-Wāthiq and Theophilus are the rulers near whose time (the forties of the ninth century) the first stages of redemption will be realized, as is suggested in detail below, 98–99.

QD had already declared that the time of redemption had arrived, and the historical prophecy was completed in this way: "And at that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, will send them His redemption."

The Vision of Daniel was updated at the end of the tenth century, without changing anything in the sequence of the description of the historical plot, from which the main text originates, and which was signed in the middle of the ninth century. This author added a patch with five caliphs from the sons of Fatima, as follows:

Then the sons of Fāṭima will crown 5 kings: The name of the most senior among them is [XXI] Maḥdī, and his reign will be 3 years. In their days, there will be sword, pestilence, and famine: and they will be erased and pass from the world as though they never were.

The five (white) Fatimids, contrasted with the (black) 'Abbāsids, were: 1. 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Maḥdī (910–934), the founder of the Fatimid dynasty; 2. Muḥammad al-Qā'im bi-Amr Allāh (934–946); 3. Ismā'il al-Manṣūr Billāh (946–953); 4. Abū Tamīm Ma'ad al-Mu'izz (953–975), during whose reign Egypt was conquered; 5. Abū Manṣūr Nizār al-'Azīz Billāh (975–996).

Abdallah was indeed the founder of the Fatimid dynasty, but he ruled for twenty-four years, not three as recorded in the vision. And the first Fatimid "five-kings" brought The Vision to the year 996. However, contrary to the vision, the dynasty did not end after five rulers. Nine more members of the dynasty ruled Egypt until 1171. The short, incorrect, and incomplete wording indicates that it is a late addition to the update, written near the end of the reign of the fifth of the Fatimid rulers, and the author imagined five rulers to meet the format of the five rulers, which is written in the Book of Daniel in chapter 7 and the beginning of

chapter 11. After five, the end could come. Elsewhere (section 3.2 [Third?] “Updating” of the Vision), a series of events was mentioned that occurred at the same time, in the last decade of the tenth century, and could serve as a new basis for messianic expectations, when it became clear to the readers of the vision that redemption had not arrived in the fourth decade of the ninth century.

As an interim summary, after the close study of the two traditions about the order of Ishmaelite kings whose reigns preceded the redemption indicates that they both derive from a single tradition. The Vision of Daniel is more polished and orderly, not only because it gives names and ordinal numbers for each ruler, but because it provides details about the reigns of most of the rulers. The discovery of Daniel’s Vision opens possibilities for deciphering QD and pointing to one primary source for two.

To complete the comparison of the Vision with QD, what follows is a detailed outline of each work’s subsequent description of the end of days—the messianic birth pangs and the redemption, highlighting the few differences between them. To that end, elements that appear in both versions will appear as standard text. Elements that appear only in the Vision will be **bolded**, and elements that occur only in QD will be *italicized*.

Vision of Daniel	QD
I. The prophetic-historical parts ‘from the past’ (<i>vaticinium ex eventu</i>) (detailed above, pp. 80–86)	
II. Messianic Birth Pangs	
A. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Camp of his Enemies: The Northerners and Gog and Magog	A. <i>The king of Edom and the decrees against the Jews</i>
a. The slaughter of the Ishmaelites and their flight to the desert	a. The slaughter of the Ishmaelites
b. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Northerners besiege Babylon, despoiling, and the flight of the residents	b. The persecution of Israel, destruction of enemies, and salvation of Israel by God
c. The fearsome appearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi	c. <i>Repentance of the Israelites</i>
d. Gog and Magog join his camp	d. <i>Nine months of continued reign, until the death of the Edomite king</i>
e. The fearsome appearance of Gog and Magog	
f. The persecution of Israel, destruction of enemies, and salvation of Israel by God	

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		B. <i>The Fearsome King of the West (Maghreb) and his Camp</i>	
		a. The appearance of <i>the King of the West</i> b. The camp of <i>the King of the West</i> c. The <i>first</i> flight of the Israelites to the mountains d. The appearance of Gog and Magog e. Gog and Magog join his camp	
B. Daniel's Fear and the Angel's Interpretation		C. Daniel's Fear and the Angel's Interpretation <i>and Encouragement to Observe the Commandments</i>	
C. Armilus, Son of the Female Figure , and his Camp		D. Other Forces of Evil Join the Camp of <i>the King of the West</i>	
a. Armilus and the Son of the Daughter of Levi b. Armilus's appearance c. Armilus's camp—different practices, including sexual transgression d. Armilus claims to be the messiah i. First wonder: bringing food to the faithful ii. His messiahship is accepted iii. Armilus and his camp in the holy place (Jerusalem?)		a. different practices, including sexual transgression b. <i>The King of the West</i> claims to be the messiah i. First wonder: bringing food to the faithful ii. His messiahship is accepted	
D. Armilus , the Righteous Man of Ephraim [Messiah ben Joseph] and his Camp: The First Encounter		E. <i>The King of the West</i> , the Man of Ephraim [Messiah ben Joseph] and his Camp: The First Encounter	
a. The direct challenge to the messiahship of Armilus b. Signs of his messiahship: The Staff of Moses and Jar of Manna		a. The direct challenge to the messiahship of <i>the King of the West</i> b. Signs of his messiahship: The Staff of Moses and Jar of Manna	
E. The Response to Armilus's Messiah Claims by the Righteous Man of Ephraim and his Jewish Followers: First Flight to the Wilderness		F. The Response to <i>the King of the West's</i> Messiah Claims by the Righteous Man of Ephraim and his Jewish Followers: Second Flight to the Wilderness of <i>Ephraim</i>	
a. Prayer and Lament b. God's response i. The promise for the future ii. God's counsel for dealing with Armilus—the question of resurrection		a. Prayer and Lament b. God's response i. The promise for the future ii. God's counsel for dealing with <i>the King of the West</i>—the question of resurrection	

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| <p>F. Armilus, Messiah ben Joseph, and his Camp: Second Encounter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The request to resurrect the dead b. Armilus's reaction—killing Messiah ben Joseph | <p>G. <i>The King of the West</i>, Messiah ben Joseph, and his Camp: Second Encounter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The request to resurrect the dead b. <i>The King of the West's</i> reaction—killing Messiah ben Joseph |
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| <p>F. The Response of the Faithful to the Killing of Messiah ben Joseph: the Second Flight to the Wilderness of Judea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prayer and lament b. God's providence for the faithful who fled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the miracle of food and drink ii. The miracle of flexible time—shortened time periods in advance of the redemption | <p>H. The Response of the Faithful to the Killing of Messiah ben Joseph: the <i>Third</i> Flight to the Wilderness of Judea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prayer and lament b. God's providence for the faithful who fled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the miracle of food and drink ii. The miracle of flexible time—shortened time periods in advance of the redemption iii. <i>Fulfillment of the covenant; light for Israel</i> iv. <i>Michael and Gabriel are sent to announce the advent of the redemption</i> |
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III. The Redemption

A. The Destruction of Remaining Enemies and the Appearance of the Rescuers

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Messiah ben Joseph fights Armilus and his camp b. The remaining enemies destroy one another c. The splitting of the Mount of Olives and the appearance of the God and the rescuers: Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and Elijah d. Messiah ben David incinerates the enemies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Michael and Gabriel</i> kill <i>the King of the West</i> b. <i>The roles of Elijah in the redemption</i> c. The splitting of the Mount of Olives and the appearance of the God and the rescuers: Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and Elijah d. Messiah ben David incinerates the enemies, including Gog and Magog |
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B. Healing the People and Repairing the World

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ingathering of exiles and resurrection of the dead b. The rebuilt Jerusalem descends c. The patriarchs, Abraham and Moses, arrive in Jerusalem | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Elijah blows the ram's horn four times</i>; the dead of the world are resurrected, and the exiles are ingathered b. The rebuilt Jerusalem descends atop the four mountains c. The patriarchs, Abraham and Moses, arrive in Jerusalem, and their conversation |
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C. The Messianic Era

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Eternal lifeb. The Banquet of the Messiahc. The return of the priesthood and Temple service | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Eternal lifeb. The Banquet of the Messiah, <i>whose duration is specified to be 1300 years</i>c. <i>Detailed description of Judgment Day, reward and punishment</i> |
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D. Conclusion of the Vision

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Daniel's joyb. The angel is revealedc. The charge of Jeremiah, Elijah, and Zerubbabel to write down the Visiond. The Vision is revealed to Ezra and Israele. Conclusion of the Vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The vision concludes <i>with a prayer</i> |
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It stands to reason that, in addition to the similarity between the two visions with respect to the list of kings, this detailed comparison indicates a high level of similarity between the two works, both in their structure and in many elements of their contents. Moreover, several details are unique to these two apocalyptic visions and do not appear in any other work:

1. The similarity of characteristics of most of the twenty caliphs (from Sulaymān on (above 80–86).
2. They have an identical lacuna of seven caliphs (from Abū Dja'far to the Mahdī, 81–82, 93–97).
3. The stages of the messianic birth pangs and the redemption are almost identical in both (above 87–89).
4. The physical dimensions of the messiah's adversary are identical (100 cubits tall, ten cubits wide, a nose one cubit long, and long, abundant hair VD 2a, l. 15; QD l. 3).¹²³
5. They are precise in their terms for the first messiah who is first called 'ben Ephraim' (VD 2b, l. 18, 3a ll. 3, 12, 14, 16; QD 42, 43.) and later 'ben Joseph' (VD 3a l. 22, 3b l. 25; QD 49).

¹²³ Hurqalya Publications: Center for Shaykhī and Bābī-Bahā'ī Studies, *Antichrist-Dajjal I - Biblical, Jewish and Christian Roots* = <https://hurqalya.ucmerced.edu/node/3591>, accessed October 27, 2025.

6. Gog and Magog have four eyes (VD 2a l. 23; QD l. 38).
7. Additional points of commonality between the Vision and QD:
 - a. The three flights of the Israelites to the wilderness (below, ch. 5.3).
 - b. The return of the fugitives for confrontations and disputations between the Jews and the enemies of the messiah (below, ch. 5.3).
 - c. Confrontations and disputations between the Jews and the enemies of the messiah (below, ch. 5.3).
 - d. The killing of Messiah ben Joseph, by the enemy of the second messiah (below, ch. 5.3, after the second flight).
 - e. Among the signs of chaos, various lifestyles are described in the camp of the enemy of the Messiah, including fornication (VD 2b l. 9; QD l. 21).
 - f. In both visions, a flexible definition of time appears near the end of the vision (below, ch. 6.2).
 - g. The burning of the wicked (below, ch. 5.1).
 - h. The combination of the redemption agents and those who sit beside the *Shekhinah* (VD 3b l. 7, 4a l. 11; QD ll. 50a, 50).
 - i. The miraculous building of Jerusalem on the mountaintops and the renewal of temple worship (VD 3b l. 17; QD l. 51).

In the discussion below of the details of the Vision, we will point out a few other similarities between the works.

Though the specifics of the final redemption and the conclusion of the works are not identical, and QD is more expansive, adding descriptions of the building of the Temple, which is absent from the Vision, it is likely that these elements were redacted during the preparation of the Judeo-Persian version without as much fealty to the original and in the spirit of the tradition.

3.2 The Vision of Daniel and the Syriac Vision of Daniel

Among the singular features of the Vision is the figure of the messiah's first enemy, the Son of the Daughter of Levi. This foe is described in terms similar to those of the Vision within the Eastern Christian tradition of the Syriac Vision of Daniel (hereinafter, "SyrD") and the Vision of the Young Daniel, and it is also briefly mentioned in a ninth-century Muslim apocalyptic work. A comparison of the opening paragraph of SyrD to that of QD shows the high degree of similarity in terms of the structure and content of the beginning of two apocalyptic works attributed to Daniel.

The three main themes of the two apocalyptic works is similar; they seek to establish Daniel's authority as a prophet who witnessed the destruction of Jerusa-

lem, who wandered among the imperial courts of the ancient Near East, who was consulted and whose assistance was sought by prophets and kings, and to whom were revealed supernal secrets, including God's designs and the hiding place of the Temple vessels. All these elements are meant to attest to the significance of Daniel's knowledge of the future. These three shared elements are described in a narrative sequence whose order is identical in both works, as follows:¹²⁴

SyrD		QD	
Main themes: 1. Daniel's authority; 2. Daniel's wandering over Eastern courts; 3. Temple implements and of the throne of Solomon.			
1	Historical introduction Jerusalem captivity including Solomon's throne.	Historical introduction Making Daniel present in the events of the destruction of the temple and taken in captivity	1–7
2–4	Daniel at the court of Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel at the court of Nebuchadnezzar Curing, interpreting	8–9
5	Sennacherib's victory over the Babylonian empire and Daniel's flight to King Cyrus of Persia	Daniel refuses to worship the statue and thrown to the fire and saved. Belshazzar and the inscription on the wall. Daniel's flight to King Cyrus of Persia	11–12
6–8	Cyrus's conquest of Babylon and the deposition of the temple implements at Mount Zilai	Cyrus's conquest of Babylon and the deposition of the temple implements. Daniel and Ezra accompany him. Ezra Hide. Darius kills Cyrus. Daniel hides.	13
9	Gemath the Magus	[Nebuchadnezzar?]	
10–12	Darius and Daniel [Chap. 11] Darius's blindness	Darius and Daniel [14–16] Darius's blindness [17]	14–19
13	Daniel's visions: transition to the eschatological part	Daniel's visions: transition to the eschatological part	20

The discussion of the Temple vessels can be added to the loose similarities already mentioned—first-person narrator, the eyes of Gog and Magog—as well as other

¹²⁴ DiTommaso notes that it does not stand to reason that the two works are linked based on a comparison of their structure, pointing out that the detailed historical section of QD (the rulers, the duration of their reigns, and their characteristics) are absent from SyrD. However, the sequence of rulers is a unit that is relatively easy to borrow from another work in order to bolster authority. See DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 83, 113 (n. 94), 224–225; and see Shapira's introduction to his appendix, below.

similarities among these four visions, which will be discussed below, in chapter 5. There, the emphasis is on the substantial similarity between the Vision of Daniel, QD, SyrD, and Young Daniel with regard to other subjects as well: The burning of the wicked, the Mount of Olives and heavenly Jerusalem, the flight to the wilderness, the Leviathan and the Behemoth, and two redeemers—Ben Joseph and Ben Jesse. Beyond all of these are the similarities that we will discuss in detail in Chapter 4: Inverting the Image of the Redeemer and his Enemies: An Example of Interreligious Discourse, concerning the figure of the Son of the Daughter of Levi and the details of the enemies of the redeemer.

The cumulative details that emerge from these comparisons show that these four works are linked to a common source and that the apocalyptic traditions of different religions are interrelated. At the textual level, these comparisons are based on phenomena that are unique to these visions and therefore indicate their proximity. The greatest similarity is between the Vision of Daniel and QD.

Based on this, we have already proposed the reconstruction of the missing part of the Vision based on QD. Further reinforcement of the proposed reconstruction comes from the similarity of the opening of SyrD and the opening of QD.

3.3 Time, Place, and Language of the Vision

3.3.1 The Main Part of the Vision

Before determining the time of composition of the central part of the Vision, let us return to the possibility that the Vision of Daniel before us was, like other apocalypses, written and updated on various occasions, as a patchwork¹²⁵.

As is typical for apocalyptic works, when the predictions proved mistaken in the audience's eyes, the compositions were updated and adapted for a later time, whether because the end of days had not yet arrived or because the ruling dynasties were replaced, thus inspiring a new round of expectations. A trace of the incorporation of traditions that stood before the redactor of the Vision can perhaps be detected in the description of Abū Dja'far. Two errors crept into this description: the omission of seven prior caliphs and a copying error that resulted in the presentation of two almost identical versions of his period of rule side by side. This attests to the work of the author of what was suggested to be the central part of the apocalyptic text, likely as he might have updated it in light of other sources at his

¹²⁵ Parts of this section draw on and extend my earlier formulation; see Ben-Sasson, "The Vision of Daniel," 337–346.

disposal. Thus, he failed precisely at the “seam” between the apocalyptic text that was what was suggested to be completed in the mid-eighth century and his own updated composition.¹²⁶

Suggested signs of early editing—the eighth century

It stands to reason that this level of detail was provided by a later collector-redactor-interpreter who incorporated the identifications and made explicit what the earlier writers left vague. This can be seen from the description of the reign of the Abbāsid Caliph Abū D̲jaʿfar al-Manṣūr, a description that appears twice in the Vision of Daniel, one after another, with the second interpreting the first:

Vision of Daniel 1a, lines 6–14	Vision of Daniel 1a, lines 14–20
XIII. Then will reign Abū D̲jaʿfar. A great sage with strong opinions he will be; like a wolf, he robs and hoards much gold and silver, leaving nothing for people	XVII [XIV?].
who seek bread and find none for he will leave nothing in their hands;	and those who remain seek, but there is nothing, for he will leave nothing in their hands;
they will offer animals for sale, but there will be no buyer;	they will offer animals for sale, but there will be no buyer
he will bury silver vessels in hiding places	from the silver vessels in their hands. He will hoard silver and gold and bury it in hiding places
And it will be revealed to the Israelites in their salvation.	and in the future it will be revealed to people in their salvation
He will be a great sage, a reader of books. He will go to pray at the temple of his mistake[n religion] and die on the way.	and he will be a great sage and a reader of books, and he will ask and seek and demand wisdom; and he will go to celebrate at the temple of his mistake[n religion] and die on the way.
And his reign will be 22 years,	And his reign will be 22 years,
whereupon he will give away his ring so that it will not be left in the hands of the members of his house	whereupon he will give his ring to the members of his household.

Both versions include the exact details, using almost identical terminology; the author interpreted one text by means of a similar variant. Perhaps the text from

¹²⁶ See also below, at the end of ch. 6.1.

which the copyist worked contained the other variant in the margins or between the lines, and the copyist of our manuscript then incorporated it, with all its mistakes, into the main flow of the text. Alternatively, perhaps he was not careful and simply copied these sections twice.

Among the details copied is the number XVII, which originally designated the next ruler (XIV), or the fourth ruler after Abū Dja'far (XVII). Either way, this interpolation and the consequent disruption of the text's linear flow caused the omission of the subsequent rulers' ordinal numbering. This narrow window into the *modus operandi* of the author or copyist of the Vision indicates later stages of correction and redaction of the original text, including the apposition of ordinal numbers to the names of rulers.

A similar description of the reign of Abū Dja'far can be found in the visions attributed to Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai — “The Secrets of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai” and “The Prayer of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai”—which describe the fourth king as one in whose days the birth pangs of the messiah will occur. The composition of these visions is suggested to be dated to the eighth century, based on the description of the king closest to the time of redemption, which is similar to what is ascribed to Abū Dja'far, as follows:

Then four other kings will arise, two of them revealed and two others who will rise against them, and in their day the son of David will arise as it is said: ‘And in the days of those kings ...’ (Daniel ii, 44)

The likeness of the first king: an experienced old man, but he is not very old. The king is humble, has handsome eyes and fine, black hair; and they are led astray by him.

And after him, another will arise in dispute, and place great armies on the Euphrates, and in one day his armies in the north and in the south will fall, and he will flee and be captured and imprisoned, and as long as he is in prison, there will be peace in the land.

The fourth king loves silver and gold, he is old and tall, and he has a mole on the big toe of his right foot. He makes coins of brass and hides them and stores them under the Euphrates with silver and gold, and they are stored for the King Messiah, as it is said: “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places” (Isaiah 45:3). In his day the horn of the peoples of the west will rebel, and he will send two armies, and they kill some of the sons of the east, and he sends others.¹²⁷

The visions attributed to Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai (the Prayer and the Secrets) indicate that the purpose of hiding treasures is so that “they are stored for the King Messiah.” These unambiguous words clarify the opaque lines of the Vision, in the

¹²⁷ Bernard Lewis, “An Apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13:2 (1950): 314; 308–338; Reeves, *Trajectories*, 88, 96; Newman, “Methodological Critique,” lxxxviii–lxxxix.

fifth passage in the comparison chart above: “and in the future it will be revealed to people in their salvation,” or in the improved version, “and it will be revealed to the Israelites in their salvation.” The deeds of Abū Dja‘far are explained in the visions attributed to Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai in connection with the prophecy of Isaiah (45:3): “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places.” His desire to keep his treasures will not be realized, and the treasures will be given to the Israelites at the time of the redemption.¹²⁸

The reign of Abū Dja‘far, which was soon after the transition from the Umayyad dynasty to the ‘Abbāsid dynasty and the relocation of the caliphate’s capital to Baghdad, was accompanied by messianic hopes among all the inhabitants of the Middle East. These hopes were expressed in writings of a messianic character and the activities of messianic movements.¹²⁹ The historical portion of the traditions, attributed to Rabbi Ishmael, concludes with Abū Dja‘far. The description of Abū Dja‘far in the Vision of Daniel incorporates elements from earlier sources, such as the traditions attributed to Rabbi Ishmael.¹³⁰ The copying error occurred in this description, resulting in the two versions above. This is evidence of the author updating his material in light of other sources at his disposal. He failed precisely at the seam between the apocalypse that was suggested to be completed in the mid-eighth century and his updated composition for his own time.

Additional evidence that Abū Dja‘far’s reign is the ‘seam’ between different periods and sources of the Vision is reflected in another error that crept into it, namely, the omission of seven caliphs who preceded Abū Dja‘far. It is not inconceivable that this fragmentary list was already produced in the eighth century, during a period that attributed redemptive significance to the years of instability at the end of the Umayyad caliphate, during the first half of the eighth century.¹³¹

Abū Dja‘far al-Manṣūr indeed ruled for twenty-two years. He founded Baghdad and built the new official residence of the caliph, Madīnat as-Salām, around which the city developed. He made significant contributions to cultivating the city as the capital of the Islamic empire. The historian al-Ya‘qūbī describes Abū Dja‘far’s accumulation of gold and silver.¹³² As for the ring mentioned in the Vision, it may

¹²⁸ The motif of rulers keeping of treasures in hiding places and those treasures ultimately reaching the hands of the Israelites appears in several *midrashim*. See Esther Rabbah 2:1; *Midrash Lekah Tov* to Esther 1:4:1; *Sifre De-aggadeta al Megilat Esther*; *Midrash Abba Gurion* 1:5.

¹²⁹ Moshe Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages* (Études sur le judaïsme médiéval 28; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 241–248 (“The Sects,” §§148–152); Cook, *Studies*, 36–49.

¹³⁰ See above, 95–96.

¹³¹ See above, 81–82, concerning the genre of the first part of the Vision.

¹³² *The Works of Ibn Waḍīḥ al-Ya‘qūbī, Volume 3: An English Translation*, ed. Matthew S. Gordon et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2018). 1123, <https://brill.com/view/title/36431>, accessed May 2, 2025. There

allude to his naming of a successor before his death. Abū Dja'far died in 775 while making a religious pilgrimage to Mecca. He was buried at an unknown site on the road to Mecca.

The ninth-century elements of the Vision warrant a broader examination. The lists of Muslim rulers do not end with the heirs of Hārūn al-Rashīd in the ninth century in either tradition, the Vision and QD. They continue to other rulers, though their identification is not as obvious, and the contents of the two traditions are not as similar. Likewise, the contents of the very last, apocalyptic section of the two traditions differ. The differences with respect to **later** Muslim rulers and the apocalyptic section indicate that the war of the three brothers and their reigns marked the endpoint of the tradition. The works were written soon after those events, and the events and rulers that appear afterward, in both works, are the updates of the authors' copyists. They updated the time of the beginning of the eschaton to their own days and regions.

QD is becoming more obscure in the middle of the period of strife between the three sons of Hārūn al-Rashīd. It gives a brief description of the reign of Al-'Amīn (809–813) and adds a sentence that summarizes the brothers' struggle. From there it goes on to describe what was looked at the time as a Shia revolution in the north-eastern parts of the caliphate: "Then another will arise after him. He will order the wearing of white clothes, and he will remove black clothes from the world" QD may have been referring to the reign of al-Ma'mūn, just after the reign of his brother, Al-'Amīn, during which he appointed the Shia Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā (d. 818, the eighth of the Twelve Imams) as his successor, raising great hopes among the Shia. However, it was an empty promise. In fact, it was most likely al-Ma'mūn, who gave the order to poison al-Riḍā.

The Vision goes on to describe, with a continuity like the earlier descriptions, but with less clarity, another brief period: the reigns of al-Ma'mūn (813–833), his brother al-Mu'taṣim (833–842), and his son Al-Wāthiq (842–847). Al-Ma'mūn ruled the caliphate for twenty turbulent years (as mentioned in QD). A series of events that took place in the Caliphate, on the Byzantine border, and in Syria in the 840s may be alluded to in the transitional paragraphs between the historical part and the visionary part of The Vision. As stressed above, the vision describes the wars between Al-'Amīn's camp and Al-Ma'mūn, hinting at major battles. QD refers only to the second phase of the campaign, which took place in Baghdad. This section of the historical vision of The Vision Al-Wāthiq campaigns includes Baghdad, Arme-

are many sources that affirm this view of Maṣṣūr; for instance, al-Ṭabarī describes Abu Dja'far al-Maṣṣūr as someone whose main interest was to accumulate money and to withhold it from Muslims.

nia, Greater Syria, and Egypt. The Vision closes this section with Al-Wāthiq's confrontation with Al-Sufyānī and the He-Goat, suggested to be referring to Abū Ḥarb Tamīm known as al-Mubārka', and the Emperor Theophilus, respectively. QD can be interpreted in relation to those events by focusing his description on the Roman king, Theophilus, and the battles against the 'Abbāsids, first against Al-Mu'taṣim and then against Al-Wāthiq.¹³³

Life in the battle zones was prone to both Christian and Muslim propaganda, which accompanied the battles that seemed as though they would determine the fate of the world. Such a historical setting is liable to become an incubator of eschatological visions for each warring party and for minorities in the war-torn regions. Some of them, like the northern Danube and Bulgaria, were forcibly dragged into military campaigns. It is easy to see the appearance of a Byzantine king and the recurrent battles against the 'Abbāsid Empire as the realization of the vision of the beasts in the biblical Book of Daniel and the requisite defeat of the king of Greece as a stage that heralds the end of days. This is likely the reason for calling the king of Greece in the Vision of Daniel by the moniker by which he is called in the biblical book, "the He-Goat," and this is the "historical" endpoint of the Vision of Daniel's composition—after the winter of 842, when Theophilus died.¹³⁴

133 The al-Riḍā events are much discussed in both Sunni and Shia sources. See, for instance, Farhad Daftary, *A History of Shi'i Islam* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 60–63; Meir Bar-Asher, *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imami Shiism* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 3–4. This event occurred closer in time to the reign of al-Amīn than either of the two previous events: the rise of the Būyids and the Fāṭimids, which were much later than al-Amīn's era. Thanks to Meir Bar-Asher for this contribution. On the period background, see Turner, "The Enigmatic Reign of al-Wāthiq," in *Abbasid Studies IV*, ed. Monique Bernards (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 218–231; al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 34: *Incipient Decline*, trans. Joel L. Kraemer (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989), 26–31.

After the book was submitted to print, a diligent doctoral thesis by Dr. Mehdi (May) Shaddel was published, which contains a partial comparison between the two visions and a proposal to see four more layers of editing or subsequent updates surrounding the civil war in the first half of the ninth century (Shaddel, "Apocalypse," 169–173). The interpretation presented here updates previous proposals that I have made for identifying the heirs of Hārūn al-Rashid, and seeks to be as simple as possible.

134 The description of the events comes from several sources. See al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 33: *Storm and Stress along the Northern Frontiers of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate: The Caliphate of al-Mu'taṣim A.D. 833–842/A.H. 218–227*, trans. and ed. C. E. Bosworth (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), 93–95 and n. 196; this contains discussion of sources parallel to al-Ṭabarī as well. See also the summary in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500–1492*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 390–392. On the influence of the late-seventh century Syriac Christian Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius on feeling and writing, see there, at the relevant index entries; on its influence on several visions of Daniel,

To the military and political tension in the ‘Abbāsīd realms during the reign of al-Mu‘taṣīm we may add an episode of revolt that occurred in the margins of the main events in the caliphate, in Transjordan and Palestine. This episode bothered the caliph and generated a great deal of interest among residents of the area near the revolt, and especially the residents of Jerusalem, Ramle, and Nablus. In 841, the revolt of Abū Ḥarb Tamīm broke out in those regions, the latter known as al-Mubārka‘ (“the Veiled One”; he covered his face so he would not be recognized). It was said that al-Mubārka‘ was from a Yemeni tribe (al-Yamānī), and according to some sources he went up to Jerusalem and put its population—Muslims, Christians, and Jews—to flight. Those same sources say that he burnt down mosques and churches, was about to burn down the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and dealt a terrible blow to the Samaritan community in Nablus. Abū Ḥarb attracted a group of adherents through his preaching and moralizing; his band of believers found refuge in the highlands of Urdunn (around the Sea of Galilee). His charismatic leadership earned him renown, and some ascribed to him the authority of a mes-

see Christopher Bonura, “When Did the Legend of the Last Emperor Originate? A New Look at the Textual Relationship between the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius and the Tiburtine Sibyl,” *Viator* 47.3 (2016): 47–100; Irshai, “Chronography and Apocalypse,” xlv–xlix. On Jewish distress in Byzantium during the reign of Theophilos, see Roly Zylbersztein, “Byzantine Views on the Jews: Studies in Polemical Discourse in the Byzantine Empire from the Seventh Century through the Eleventh Century” (PhD diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007), 46–48, 162–165. An echo of the events of that time – the conquest of Cilicia (827–829) and the organization of a fleet at Attalia to conquer Constantinople (846) – are found in an apocalyptic vision attributed to John Chrysostom concerning the vision of Daniel and connected to the aforementioned Pseudo-Methodius; see Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 72–77; DiTommaso, *Daniel* [§2.15], 155–158, 362–363; András Kraft, “The Last Roman Emperor Topos in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition” (MA thesis, Central European University, 2011), 55–57; András Kraft, “The Last Roman Emperor Topos in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition,” *Byzantion* 82 (2012): 213–257; George T. Zervos, “Apocalypse of Daniel (Ninth Century A.D.): A New Translation and Interpretation,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Volume 1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 755–770. On the eschatological mood in Muslim society around the year 200 AH (815–816 CE), see David Cook, “The Apocalyptic Year 200/815–16 and the Events Surrounding It,” *Apocalyptic Time*, 41–68. Wilferd Madelung discusses material that hints at apocalyptic predictions current at the time which may have influenced al-Ma‘mūn: “New Documents Concerning al-Ma‘mūn, al-Faḍl b. Sahl, and ‘All al-Ridā,” in *Studia Arabica et Islamica: Festschrift for Ihsān Abbās*, ed. Wadād al-Qādl (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1981), 333–346. At the end of the article, Madelung suggests that al-Ma‘mūn’s decision to nominate al-Mu‘taṣīm was “almost at random” and that the caliph may have simply lost “faith in the future of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate” (346); see also: John A. Nawas, “All in the Family? Al-Mu‘taṣīm’s Succession to the Caliphate as Denouement to the Lifelong Feud between al-Ma‘mūn and his Abbasid Family,” *Oriens* 38 (2010): 77–88.

siah-rebel against the ‘Abbāsids, who would restore the throne of the caliphate to the Umayyads. Indeed, his conquests reached as far as Damascus, which he flooded with the blood of his victims.

A messianic figure to whom are attributed designs to restore the Umayyad caliphate was known in Muslim tradition as “al-Sufyānī.” The demonic characteristics of an enemy of the messiah and the world were ascribed to him; this sometimes included an unnatural, fearsome visage. Perhaps the author of the Vision of Daniel refers to al-Sufyānī among the enemies of al-Mu‘taṣim when he writes, “the He-Goat (Ẓefir ‘Izim) whose name is Ẓafinī,” for the Hebrew “Ẓafinī” (צפִּינִי) can be vocalized as Z/Sufyānī (זֶ/סֻפְיָאֲנִי). Abū Ḥarb, like Theophilos, waged war against al-Mu‘taṣim, and eschatological feelings could have developed around his campaign, particularly in connection with the devastation that occurred in Jerusalem and Nablus. It follows that the combination of the He-Goat and al-Sufyānī could have become a generic name for all of al-Mu‘taṣim’s enemies.¹³⁵

The information that we have accumulated thus far demonstrates the writer of the Vision’s familiarity with Muslim history. The time of its composition and the events that underlie the determination that the time of redemption had arrived indicate that the work may have been composed in the area where al-Mu‘taṣim battled Theophilos: the areas of northern Syria and Anatolia bound by Aleppo, Antioch, Tarsus, and Edessa. Alternatively, it could have been composed in the region where the agents of al-Mu‘taṣim battled Abū Ḥarb Tamīm, namely, in Palestine. Both took place in the 840s.

We can also determine the language in which this tradition was written and the stages of revision it underwent before arriving at the extant versions. The fluency of the text of the Vision and its integration of certain turns of phrase attest to its composition in Hebrew. Aharon Maman of Hebrew University’s Department of

135 Al-Sufyānī was named for Abu Sufyan, the patriarch of one of the two branches of the Banu Umayya, the Umayyad clan. See in detail: Herbert Eisenstein, “Die Erhebung des Mubārqa’ in Palaestina,” *Orientalia* 55 (1986): 454–458; al-Ṭabarī, *History*, vol. 33, 203–206; Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 295–296 (§414); DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 171–172, discussing the Arabic apocalypse published in David B. Cook, “An Early Muslim Daniel Apocalypse,” *Arabica* 49 (2002): 55–96. Al-Sufyānī is mentioned explicitly in a Genizah fragment of the Vision of Zerubbabel. See Gil, Zerubbabel, 49–50, 66 [section X, lines 1–8]. See Gil’s discussion of the fragment as well, at 15–16. On Al-Sufyānī in Muslim tradition, and on ninth-century anticipation of his advent after the age of al-Amīn ibn Hārūn al-Raṣhīd, see Wilferd Madelung, “The Sufyānī between Tradition and History,” *Studia Islamica* 63 (1984): 5–48 (reprinted in Wilferd Madelung, *Religious and Ethnic Movements in Medieval Islam* [Abingdon, UK: Variorum, 1992]); Wilferd Madelung, “al-Sufyānī,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. P. Bearman et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2022), https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_8902, accessed May 2, 2025; Cook, *Studies*, 48–52.

Hebrew Language confirmed this conclusion after a meticulous reading of the text. He concluded his note:

On balance, the work is of a high Biblical stylistic register, riven with quite a few Rabbinic expressions and a few medieval ones. The work seems to have been composed in Hebrew originally, though there are a few instances where foreign influence, like Arabic, might be detectable. In general, the language is straightforward and typical of medieval literary Hebrew.

The prophetic style of the Vision draws on the biblical Book of Daniel to present itself as prophecy and cites Scripture *passim* as proof of its direct revelation, even if by means of an angel.¹³⁶ Shapira proposes that the middle part of QD, which describes the gentile kingdoms, is an independent work based on the Vision of Daniel. Shapira maintains that QD is not an original composition. He further proposes that there is a connection between the middle part of the work and Shia Iranian apocalypses of the type known as “*malāḥim*, *Malḥamat Dāniyāl*.”¹³⁷ Our examination of the two parts of both visions suggests that they may have been based on a single original main version.

3.3.2 (Third?) “Updating” of the Vision

At the endpoint of the Vision of Daniel, after the winter of 842, when Theophilos died, the author goes on to describe the massive battles that portend the eschaton, marking them with a new introduction: “After all of these.”

At some point between the 840s and the late-tenth century, someone attempted to “revive” the Vision and add another bit of prophecy around the year 1000, a century-and-a-half after the age of al-Mu‘taṣim and Theophilos. The addition of a short passage foretells the rise of the Fāṭimids:

¹³⁶ Examples of Rabbinic Hebrew include, *inter alia*: ארך, ויטמון במטמונים, ראש לחכמים, ומתיר(א)ים! את נשותיהן אילו לאילו, והולכין אצלן, הקדוש ברוך הוא, מלך מלכי המלכות, בים, האילו, בעל-דין, ומלכות שלו. See the critical apparatus of the text for further examples; on the use of prophetic first person’s style in different visions, see DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 108–122, https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_0019, accessed May 2, 2025; Lorenzo DiTommaso, “*Malāḥim*,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_4848, accessed May 2, 2025.

¹³⁷ Shapira, “*Qišsa*,” 339. On *Malāḥim*, see Cook, *Studies*, 28–30, 255–278; Cook, “Muslim Daniel Apocalypse;” David B. Cook, “Apocalypse,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Kate Fleet et al. (3rd ed.; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

Then the sons of Fāṭima will crown 5 kings: The name of the most senior among them is Mahdī, and his reign will be 3 years. In their days, there will be sword, pestilence, and famine: and they will be erased and pass from the world as though they never were. (2a, 1–4, 1:10)

Thus, the author concludes the list of twenty rulers who will reign before the eschatological vision transpires. Of the first five Fāṭimid kings, none ruled for only three years, not even the fifth, bringing the eschatological moment of the Vision to approximately the year 995. We can hypothesize that this last addendum was written at that time, when the confluence of world events could have led the one who updated the Vision to the conclusion that he was witnessing both the end of the Fāṭimid dynasty and the imminent unfolding of the eschatological moment. The events, dates, and acute messianic expectations that the author of the addendum may have had in mind or could have been influenced by include:

- a. The death of the fifth Fāṭimid king al-ʿAziz in 996 brought the five Fāṭimid kings' episode to a close.
- b. A series of major revolts; the Tyre revolts, aided by a number of Byzantine attacks against Egypt and Syria, led by Emperor Basil II, took place in 996.¹³⁸
- c. A major earthquake in the Damascus area and the Baʿlbak region, where a village was swallowed up by the earth in 991.
- d. A plague of locusts in 993 and a major famine in Egypt in 997.¹³⁹
- e. The Easterner, “the king from the east,” could hypothetically have been seen (by that time) as the Qarmatians, since they did come from the east, shed plenty of blood, waged multiple battles in Syria, and terrorized Syrians all the way through the third part of the tenth century.¹⁴⁰
- f. This period was just before the year 400 AH and close to the end of the first millennium CE, thus producing messianic fervor among Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. The year 1000 mattered greatly in Byzantium (possibly more so than in the Latin West). The fear of the year 1000 was a possible context for the assumed third redaction of the *Vision of Daniel*. As repeated in this publication, *The Vision of Daniel* reacted to the contents and structure of Christian **and** Muslim apocalyptic traditions (e.g., Jesus' eschatological role). Millennial anxieties could have spurred the final redaction of *The Vision of Daniel*.¹⁴¹

138 Gil, *Palestine*, 369–370.

139 Itti'āz al-ḥunafā bi-aḥbār al-a'emma al-fāṭimiyīn al-ḥulafā, li-Taḳī ad-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī (Cairo: Taḥqīq Ḡamāl ad-Dīn aš-Šaiyāl Al-Maḡlis al-A'lā li-š-Šu'un al-Islāmīya: Laḡnat lḥyā' at-Turāt al-Islāmī, 1390 [H]) 1.16.

140 Wilferd Madelung, “Qarmatī,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0451, accessed May 2, 2025.

141 See Richard Landes, “Millenarianism / Millennialism,” in *Vocabulary for the Study of Religion*, ed. Robert Segal and Kocku Von Stuckrad (Leiden: Brill, 2016), https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/9789004249707_

- g. Another apocalyptic text, found in the Cairo Genizah and reconstructed and edited by Moshe Gil, refers, according to Gil's reconstruction, to the 990s. This text is an updated version of the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.¹⁴²
- h. In historical and apocalyptic writings of these years, one can find, again, al-Sufyānī.¹⁴³

With regard to the dating and the relationship of the Sufyānī snippet at the end of the earlier section of the apocalypse, and then to the Fāṭimid update, one might consider that while the identification of Al-Sufyānī in the original apocalypse was with al-Mubārqa', the fact is that there was a whole series of Sufyānī appearances in Syria, all the way up to the 1400s. Perhaps the removal of such a key figure was taken as a sign that the dynasty was at an end. The writer of the Fāṭimid section was living in greater Syria (because it does not seem likely that many outsiders of Syria would know about Al-Sufyānī or care about him by the late 990s), and there was another Sufyānī appearance at that time, just as there were a whole series of revolts against the Fāṭimids. Someone in Syria looking for the apocalypse at that point might note the bloodshed, followed by Al-Sufyānī's appearance and the end of the Fāṭimids.

Although one could say that such disasters are always occurring somewhere, apocalyptic predictions are so often sparked by a confluence of events where each confirms the others as being significant. During the last decade of the tenth century, the apocalypse might very well have seemed to be coming to pass, so the visions predicting it were worth updating. Thus, contrary to the statement of the Vision, the dynasty was not destroyed after five rulers. Another nine Fāṭimids reigned in Egypt until 1171. The abbreviated, mistaken, and deficient update indicates that it was a late addition to the text. The author of the updated part of the Vision estimated that the dynasty would have five rulers in order to keep to the pattern from chapter 7 and the beginning of chapter 11 of the Book of Daniel: There will be three kings in

vsr_COM_00000370, accessed May 2, 2025; see also Richard Landes, "Lest the Millennium Be Fulfilled: Apocalyptic Expectations and the Pattern of Western Chronography, 100–800 CE," in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 137–209. Regarding Byzantium, see Magdalino, "The Year 1000". I thank Prof. Dr. András Kraft for drawing my attention to the special Byzantine context of the millennium.

¹⁴² Gil, "Zerubbabel", is a reconstruction of the text from nineteen fragments found in six Genizah manuscripts.

¹⁴³ A Sufyānī appearance in the year 385/995: *ba'atha Mufarraj bin Dughpul al-Jarāh bi-rajul min a'mal al-Sham za'ma innahu al-Sufyānī fa-shahara 'ala jamal wa-huwa yusfa'*; see *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā*, 1.285. See also above, n. 139.

Persia, the fourth will have great wealth, and the fifth will be a warrior. After the fifth king, the eschaton will come to fruition.¹⁴⁴

If the Vision of Daniel was indeed before the author of QD, then the latter described the Fāṭimids as conquerors who arrived to remove the most identifiable sign of the ‘Abbāsids—black clothes—and replace them with white garments.¹⁴⁵

The descriptions of the end of days in the Vision of Daniel and QD both resemble a collection from the descriptive tradition of apocalyptic literature. This has been described and discussed at length in the scholarly literature. Its components, many already detailed in *Sefer Zerubbabel*, are: the appearance of a terrible giant with clearly physical features, named Armilus; Armilus kills those among the gentiles and Israel; Gog and Magog arrive, and the people of Israel are persecuted; the nations of the north, south, and west gather together; decrees against religion are propagated, and Armilus claims to be the messiah; Armilus is tested in the performance of signs and wonders, and he partially succeeds; Messiah ben Joseph arrives, wages war against Armilus, and is killed; the remnants of Israel flee to the desert; Daniel prays for Israel in its distress; the angel appears and foretells a turning of the tides for Israel—they will prevail; Messiah ben Joseph will be resurrected and will successfully battle Armilus; the dead will be resurrected; Israel’s diaspora will be gathered to Jerusalem; Jerusalem and the Temple will be rebuilt; the Temple will function once again.¹⁴⁶

144 See Marius Canard, “Fāṭimids,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0218, accessed May 2, 2025; Heinz Halm, “Fāṭimids,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd ed., https://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_27045, accessed May 2, 2025.

145 See Moshe Sharon, *Black Banners from the East: The Establishment of the ‘Abbāsid State: Incubation of a Revolt* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1983), 12–28, 50–54, 178–185.

146 Amos Funkenstein, “A Schedule for the End of the World: The Origins and Persistence of the Apocalyptic Mentality,” in *Visions of Apocalypse: End or Rebirth*, ed. Saul Friedländer et al. (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), 44–60 [= Saul Friedländer, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 70–87]. On satanic figures in Rabbinic literature, see the summary by Dan, *History of Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 2, 506–541, and especially 539–540 (on Armilus); Joseph Dan, “Armilus: The Jewish Antichrist and the Origins and Dating of the *Sefer Zerubbabel*,” in *Toward the Millennium: Messianic Expectations from the Bible to Waco*, ed. Peter Schäfer and Mark R. Cohen (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 73–104; Himmelfarb, *Zerubbabel*, 3–7, 32–38, 56–59, 126–136. On the early dating of the traditions about Armilus and Messiah ben Joseph, see Israel Knohl, “The Suffering Messiah according to the Book of Zerubbabel and Midrash Pesiqta Rabbati,” in *Milhemet Gog u-Magog*, ed. David Ariel-Yoel et al. (Tel-Aviv: Yedioth Ahronoth, 2001), 32–37 [Hebrew]; Israel Knohl, “On ‘the Son of God’; on earlier (third to sixth century) texts mentioning Armilus, see Marius Nel, “The Signs of the Messiah (*‘otot hamashiach*) and Jewish apocalypticism,” *Journal of Early Christian History* 2 (2012): 63–79.

These details do not appear in every work, nor do they appear in the same order. The order of events, the names of the people associated with the messiah and the process of redemption, the details of the redemption of the people, the redemption and rebuilding of Jerusalem—these all vary from vision to vision. However, with respect to all of these elements, the Vision of Daniel and QD are almost completely identical.¹⁴⁷

Nevertheless, the Vision of Daniel has a few details that do not appear in QD. They primarily relate to the two enemies of the messiah: the Son of the Daughter of Levi and Armilus. The redactor who reworked the Vision into QD ‘softened’ the names of the enemies of the messiah and replaced the Son of the Daughter of Levi (whose connotation of Moses is problematic) with the “king from among the Romans” and Armilus (perhaps not as familiar in Persia) with a king “from the land of the west/Maghreb, the worst and more cruel than those before him.” These names are more generic than those of traditional literature.

¹⁴⁷ The names that are the same in both visions are: Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Ezra, and Zerubbabel. See also the chart comparing 24 different visions of Daniel (with respect to 15 apocalyptic features) in DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 198.

4 Inverting the Image of the Redeemer and his Enemies: An Example of Interreligious Discourse

4.1 The Two Enemies of the Redeemer in Visions of Daniel

The name of the enemy of the messiah, ‘the Son of the Daughter of Levi,’ is unique in the whole rich and variegated Jewish literature. Only contextual reading of other apocalypses, Christian and Muslim, can shed light on this very peculiar use. In the region the Vision was composed, northern parts of Syria and Iraq, large concentrations of non-Muslims, including Christians (who, in some places, still constituted a majority) and Jews shared common intellectual ground. Intellectuals of the three religions used Christian commentaries on the Hebrew Bible translated from Syriac to Arabic (presumably with some adjustments) and polemical literature, both as separate works and combined with theological or exegetical discussions and vivid meetings of scholars dedicated to learning and discourses. Conception of a shared, intercommunal identity is discernible among theologians of different religions, based on their philosophical engagement. These theologians were members of small groups who met for the purpose of discourse and polemics. These and more laid the foundations for the grand tradition of theological works and systematic medieval exegesis of Scripture.¹⁴⁸

The recent publication of four visions of Daniel—two Christian and two Jewish—plus a Muslim apocalyptic tradition that is not attributed to Daniel help us decipher the enigmatic Son of the Daughter of Levi and enable a new discussion of these eschatological traditions has arisen.¹⁴⁹ The two Christian works are the Syriac Vision of Daniel and the Vision of the Young Daniel. They were written in Syriac, apparently in the first half of the seventh century, in Syria, against the backdrop of the wars between the great powers that altered the world order dur-

148 Sarah Stroumsa, “Oriental Intellectual Convivencia: al-Raqqa, Mosul and Aleppo, Then and Now,” *Alpayyim Va’od* 3 (2021): 16–25 [Hebrew]; Dāwūd al-Muqammas, *Twenty Chapters*, 276–279.

149 For the Syriac Vision of Daniel, see Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 46–49, 89–96; DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel* 113–123 (text 2.5). For the Vision of the Young Daniel, see Sebastian Brock, “The Small/Young Daniel Re-edited,” in *The Embroidered Bible: Studies in Biblical Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Honour of Michael E. Stone*, ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso, Matthias Henze, and William Adler (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 269; Hans Schmoldt (ed.), *Die Schrift “Vom jungen Daniel” und “Daniels letzte Vision”* (Hamburg: University of Hamburg, 1972), 68–75; DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel* 111–113 (§2.4). References hereafter are to the Brock edition. For QD, see Shapira, “Qışsa.” For the Muslim tradition, see below, ch. 4.3.2. For full bibliographic references, additional editions, and other discussions, see the aforementioned editions. Several editors’ notes are included in the footnotes to the sources below.

ing the first three decades of the seventh century. In the first third of the seventh century, the stable order that had endured for around seven centuries and had preserved the balance of power between two superpowers, Rome (Byzantium) and Persia, collapsed. The collapse was caused by Persian conquest, Byzantine reconquest, the mutual weakening of the two powers, and the entry of a third actor from the south—the Arabs—into the weakened northern arena. Numerous apocalyptic works are dated to the seventh century, including these Syriac Christian visions of Daniel.¹⁵⁰

The Jewish works are our Hebrew Vision of Daniel and the Judeo-Persian 'Qišša-ye Dāniyāl (QD). These works were composed in the second half of the ninth century. To the four visions of Daniel should be added a brief Muslim apocalyptic tradition, likewise from the ninth century. As discussed above, these works were written against the backdrop of ninth-century wars that seemed like they would decide the fate of each empire, reshape the world, or even bring about the end of the world. Each side, Muslim and Byzantine alike, propagandized the battles in a global context. The progression of battles served as fertile soil for a new wave of apocalyptic works, authored by residents of the war-torn regions and by those who received word of the battles.¹⁵¹

150 On the events of the seventh century, see Bowersock, *Empires in Collision* 29–77; Howard-Johnston, “Two Great Powers”; Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs*; Gil, *Palestine*, 9–54; Gil, *In the Kingdom of Ishmael*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1997), 55–58 [Hebrew]. On Pseudo-Methodius, see the citations in the next note and Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*; on the Christian apocalyptic literature that was produced as a specific reaction to the emergence of Islam and the consolidation of Islamic rule in the Eastern provinces of Byzantium see Emmanouela Grypeou, “‘A People Will Emerge from the Desert’: Apocalyptic Perceptions of the Early Muslim Conquests in Contemporary Eastern Christian Literature,” in *Apocalypticism and Eschatology in the Abrahamic Religions between the 6th and 8th Centuries*, ed. Hagit Amirav, Emmanouela Grypeou, and Guy Stroumsa (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 292–309; Emmanouela Grypeou, “‘The Abomination of Desolation’: Eastern Christian Apocalyptic Literature and the Symbolic Construction of Islam,” *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 20 (2023): 57–71, who examines how Eastern Christian apocalyptic texts recycled, used and manipulated long established cultural stereotypes, biblical exegetical topoi and traditional apocalyptic motifs, in constructing the image of the Muslims as the symbolic “Other.”

151 For a description of the events of the ninth century, see al-Ṭabarī, *History* xxxiii, 93–95, which contains discussion of parallel sources as well. See also the summary in Shepard, *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire* 390–392. On the influence of the late seventh-century Syriac Christian Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius on feeling and writing, see the relevant index entries in Shepard, *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*; Irshai, “If You See Kingdoms Struggling,” xlv–xlix. On Jewish distress in Byzantium during the reign of Theophilos, see Zylbersztein, “Byzantine Views on the Jews,” 46–48, 162–165. An echo of the events of that time—the conquest of Cilicia (827–829) and the organization of a fleet at Attalia to conquer Constantinople (846)—are found in an apocalyptic vision attributed to John Chrysostom concerning the Vision of Daniel and connected to the afore-

According to these visions and their ancient authoritative sources, those responsible for the present distress and difficulties are hostile nations who have managed, by the might of the sword, to achieve positions of power in this world, and they are led by powerful, mythic enemies. The most prominent examples of such leaders are Gog and Magog (Ezek 38–39). They appear in the traditions of each religion as oppressors who intensify the burden of suffering. Alongside Gog and Magog, the apocalyptic sources describe another mythological figure: the enemy of the redeemer, a foe with a threatening, satanic visage, sometimes monstrous and inhuman. This is the figure known as the Antichrist, Armilus, al-Sufyānī, and al-Dajjāl.¹⁵²

mentioned Pseudo-Methodius; see Alexander, *Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, 72–77; DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*, 155–158, 362–363 (text 2.16). See also Cook, “Apocalyptic Year;” Cook, *Studies*, 48–52; Madelung, “Sufyānī between Tradition and History;” Madelung, “Al-Sufyānī.” Oded Irshai adds that since the Book of Daniel served as a major source for Jewish and Christian eschatological and apocalyptic visions prior to the rise of Islam, the “He-Goat” and the “Horned Ram” of the Book of Daniel had different identifications and served different roles, depending on the scenario described in these works. An interesting example of this can be found in a work from around the mid-third century, the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle, which centers on the Roman-Sasanian tensions of that time. See the important work: David S. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Empire: A Historical Commentary on the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), which contains a broad historical introduction, a critical edition of the text, and explanatory notes. I thank Oded Irshai for this contribution.

152 On satanic figures in Rabbinic literature and the early dating of traditions about Armilus, see above, 104–105. See also below, 115–119, 127–132, and toward the end of 4.1.2. On the Antichrist, see below, ch. 4.3.c. On al-Dajjāl and al-Sufyānī, see below, 73–74, 100–106, 118–119 and the sources and further discussions cited there. Armilus is mentioned in several sources, and it is difficult to determine which are earlier and which are later: Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Deut 34:3 (‘Armalgos’) and Isa 11:4 (a later date is given in Leopold Zunz and Hanokh Albeck, *Haderashot be-Yisrael* [2nd ed.; Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1954]: 429, n. 31), and the Book of Zerubbabel, based on Isa 11:4. Armilus is also mentioned in Pseudo-Methodius (Garstad, *Pseudo-Methodius*, 31) and in a poem attributed to Qilir (Fleischer, “Qiliri Riddle,” 406–407). See also: Reeves, *Trajectories*, 59 nn. 135–138; John C. Reeves, “Otot ha-Mashiah (Signs of the Messiah) According to Oxford Ms. Bodl. Or. 135: A Transcription and Translation,” in *Above, Below, Before and After: Studies on Judaism and Christianity in Dialogue with Martha Himmelfarb*, eds. Ra’anan Boustan, David Frankfurter, and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023), 379–396 (on the seventh sign). Reeves notes that a completely different description appears in *Midrash Vayosha* and *Nistarot De-Rashbi*.

As noted, Armilus is the Jewish equivalent to the Christian Antichrist and the Muslim Dajjāl. This particular designation is first attested in both Jewish and Christian literature stemming from the first half of the seventh century CE. See Leopold Zunz and Hanokh Albeck, *Haderashot be-Yisrael* (2nd ed.; Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1954), 429–430, n.31; Saadia Gaon, *Kitāb al-Amānāt wa’l-’Itiqādāt von Sa’adja b. Jūsuf al-Fajjūmī*, ed. Samuel Landauer (Leiden: Brill, 1880), 239.4–6; 241.11–13 [English translation, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions* (trans. Samuel Rosenblatt; New Haven: Yale Uni-

Indeed, all four visions of Daniel mention Gog and Magog, but the main struggle before the advent of the redeemer is with **two** anti-messianic figures. The two anti-messiahs in each of these visions are worthy of further study for several reasons: they attest to reciprocal relationships between eschatological visions of the various religions; they are consistent with several Muslim, Christian, and Jewish apocalyptic visions; and they indicate close connections between the three monotheistic religions in portraying not only the figure of the redeemer but also the figures of the redeemer's foes.

4.1.1 Enemies of the Redeemer in Syriac Visions of Daniel

Several similar components in Young Daniel and SyrD attest that they drew on shared earlier sources. With respect to the enemies of the messiah, their descriptions are similar and, importantly, unique to them. In both of these visions, the enemy of the redeemer appears first; he is called first by a unique name, the Son of the Daughter of Levi, and then the Antichrist. The two enemies of the redeemer are described as fearsome, satanic figures, and the details of their figures are identical in the two visions.

SyrD presents the matter as follows:

It will be in those days, **a woman will bear a son from the tribe of Levi**. And there will appear on him these signs: something will be represented on his skin like weapons of war, the details of a breastplate,¹⁵³ a bow, and a sword, a spear, an iron dagger, and chariots of war. His countenance will be like the countenance of a burning furnace, and his eyes like burning coals. Between his eyes he has a horn whose tip is broken off,¹⁵⁴ and something which has the appearance of a serpent is coming out of it. When these signs are about to occur, then the advent of the senseless,¹⁵⁵ the crooked serpent, the **Antichrist**, will be about to appear. He will come from the ends of the land of the east to seduce the inhabitants of the world. He will say about himself, "I am Christ!" He will come out of a serpent's belly, from the intestines of an adder. With him will come many guards and mighty angels. And these are his signs and the awe-inspiring vision of his stature: his head is huge, his hair red, his eyes blue, and his neck strong. His sides¹⁵⁶ are high, his chest broad, his arms long, and his fingers short. He has two

versity Press, 1948), 301–302; 304]. See also the detailed discussion in Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 91 n. 127.

¹⁵³ The Syriac *ʿtnwr* can also mean 'furnace'; Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 89 and n. 122, offers this translation based on context.

¹⁵⁴ See Dan 8:5–8.

¹⁵⁵ Lit. 'the stripped of heart'; this is the second enemy of the redeemer.

¹⁵⁶ Alternatively: 'his eyebrows.'

horns next to his ears, and he has strong flesh in his ear, as well as lean flesh.¹⁵⁷ His figure is wrathful, stupendous, and furious, the figure of his stature is likewise stupendous. He will appear like lightning in the sky and like a lamp in the camp.¹⁵⁸ With him [will be] fiery chariots and war camps. Faster than a leopard are his horses, and bolder than the evening wolves his couriers.¹⁵⁹ His stature is great and high and floats over the mountains, equal to the clouds of the sky.¹⁶⁰ With him [will come] a host of serpents and camps of Indians. Then the Gates of the North¹⁶¹ will be opened before him, and the army of Mebagbel¹⁶² will come out, and the multitude of the **Agogites and Magogites**, enormous in their statures, and mighty in their strength, and numerous in their hosts. ...

The islands of the sea will live in fear, thinking that he is Christ. Many will go astray after him, for many signs and wonders he will perform.¹⁶³ However, he is unable to raise the dead. His kingdom will last for a time, times, and half a time, that is, three years and six months.¹⁶⁴ He will begin to stir up those who live in Zion as well as the cult of those who are foreigners in Jerusalem. He will be cursed from heaven, and he will act deceitfully against those who are close to him.¹⁶⁵

The text of Young Daniel is similar, but its end has been lost. This is what survives:

¹⁵⁷ The two horns are based on Rev 13:11; see below, 116 n. 179. The strong flesh is absent in several paintings of the Antichrist; alongside the horns were drawn elongated ears whose upper part is hard connective tissue and whose lower part is elongated, flexible cartilage. See Bernard McGinn, *Anti-Christ: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994), 148–149 figs. 9–10; 177 fig. 16; 193 fig. 19. See also the table comparing the external appearance of the Antichrist according to fourteen different sources at 72–73; this follows McGinn, “Portraying the Antichrist in the Middle Ages,” in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, eds. Werner Verbeke et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 1–48. For a collection of illustrations, see there, 29–48; Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 211–226. See also below, 131 n. 202.

¹⁵⁸ Here the Antichrist appears with the signs preceding the advent of Jesus, to mislead those who see him (Matt 24:27).

¹⁵⁹ Jer 5:6; Hab 1:8.

¹⁶⁰ Dan 7:13. The parallel text of Young Daniel ends here; see below, 111 n. 168.

¹⁶¹ According to the apocalyptic traditions of the stories of Alexander, the Indians are among the nations imprisoned behind the “Gates of the North.” See Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 11–14, 77–81, 92–93, and nn. 136–138.

¹⁶² *MBGBL*; perhaps this refers to the army of Gebal, mentioned in Ezek 27:9 and Ps 83:8 among nations hostile to Israel (the Peshitta translator of Ezekiel used *GBL*, whereas in Psalms he appears to have thought that it was not a proper name and translated it as ‘*tehuma*’ [‘border,’ after the Hebrew ‘*gevul*’]).

¹⁶³ Matt 24:24.

¹⁶⁴ Dan 7:25.

¹⁶⁵ Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 21–24 (with skips); 46–49 (original); 89–96 (English translation). The translation is Henze’s; the emphases are mine and highlight descriptions that appear also in some of the other visions discussed here.

It will be after these days¹⁶⁶ **a woman will bear a male from the tribe of the House of Levi**, and there will be seen on him these signs: there will be depicted on his flesh as it were weapons of war, lance and bows, scimitars, spears, and a sword of iron, also chariots of war. His countenance will be that of a burning furnace, and his eyes are like burning coals. And he has a single horn on his forehead, whose tip is broken. And there proceeds from it as it were the semblance of a snake. When these things have happened, recognize that the advent of the Heartless One is close by, to come from the extremities of the East; And there shall be revealed at this time the Son of Perdition on earth,¹⁶⁷ to deceive the residents of the world. And he will say of himself, “I am the Messiah.” And he will issue from the belly of an adder and from the intestines of a snake. There will come [with him] peoples and mighty kings, and many guards. And these are his signs: the appearance of his stature and his head is large, his hair [like a] cock’s comb, his eyes glistening, his eyebrows raised; and he has two horns in his ears and there is excessive flesh inside his ear. His neck is strong, his chest broad, his arms long, and his fingers short. His appearance is furious, fearful and wrathful. The appearance of his stature is amazing, and like a torch of fire amid camps of war. Faster than a leopard are his horses, and swifter than evening wolves. His stature is exalted above the mountains, on a level with the clouds in heaven. With him is an army of serpents.¹⁶⁸

According to these visions, the redeemer has two enemies. The first is the **Son of the Daughter of Levi**, and the second is called by two different names: Antichrist in the Syriac Vision of Daniel, and the Son of Perdition in the Vision of the Young Daniel. The two enemies of the redeemer are described similarly in the two works. The son of the Levite woman bears warlike tattoos on his skin. He has a single broken horn between his eyes, and a dragon or a serpent emerges from it. Following the Son of the Daughter of Levi is the Antichrist, described as a giant, taller than mountains, with two horns, enlarged ears with soft and hard parts, and a hard neck. He is described as being quick as lightning and accompanied by fast, fearsome war camps, like evening wolves. Both enemies claim to be the messiah. We will return to the fearsome images of the redeemer’s enemies near the end of this article.

¹⁶⁶ In the margins of the manuscript, a later hand has written ‘Antichrist.’ This attribution to the Son of the Daughter of Levi fits his external appearance and the content of his actions, but in descriptions that include the two enemies of the messiah, the epithet ‘Antichrist’ is reserved for the second of them. See the discussion of the two enemies of the messiah below, ch. 4.1–2.

¹⁶⁷ *Bar Abadana*. This begins the description of the second enemy of the redeemer. He and his deeds are described in 2 Thess 2:3–12.

¹⁶⁸ Sebastian Brock, “Small/Young Daniel,” 279–281. At this point, the text of Young Daniel is cut off. For the date of the vision, see Brock, “The Young Daniel: A Syriac Apocalyptic Text on the End, and the Problem of Its Dating,” in *Apocalypticism and Eschatology in the Abrahamic Religions between the 6th and 8th Centuries*, ed. Hagit Amirav, Emmanouela Grypeou, and Guy Stroumsa (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 75–86.

4.1.2 Enemies of the Redeemer in Jewish Visions of Daniel

In QD, the two enemies of the redeemer are not called by proper names. One is the king of the Romans, and the other is the king of the West—an enemy more terrible than any other. The description of the first one, who oppresses the world and Israel, is a human description:

Then will arise a king from among the Romans,¹⁶⁹ dressed in red clothes.¹⁷⁰ He will advance until Damascus and will wage wars. And he will kill the great ones of Ishmael, their most honored, and their kings, and the kingship will pass from the Ishmaelites. He will destroy the mosques and smash their minarets, and no one will ever again call in the name of the disqualified one.¹⁷¹ He will eradicate the kingdom of Ishmael; it will never rise again. The rest of the people will be under his protection and will obey him all the days of his life. And anyone who disobeys him will be killed. Troubles and difficulties will come upon the Israelites. He will forbid circumcision and the Sabbath, and he will not allow the reading of the Torah or the recitation of prayer. He will put many Israelites to death; fortunate is the Israelite who will hold on to his Israelite ways at that time and they who disobey these [decrees]. After this trouble that will befall the Israelites, all the Israelites will gather and repent. And at that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, will send them His redemption. And he who will have conquered the whole world, he will rule for 9 months, and he will die.

Then another will arise from the land of the West, more terrible and more fiendish than [those] who preceded him, and this is his sign: his height is 100 cubits and 11 spans, and his width 10 spans, and his mouth—one span, and he will have much hair on his face. And he will conquer all the land of the West. And there will be wicked people and warmongers, and they will gather from throughout the world and go to him to say that he is the messiah. And the voice of these people shall go forth throughout the world. And the whole world will be under his hand. He will kill everyone who disobeys him, and the Israelites will be in trouble and distress. And they will flee from their [the “wicked ones”] hands, and there will be trouble throughout the world. And they will go to the mountains, and there their leader will be revealed, and the army of Gog and Magog will accompany him. And this will be their sign: each of them has four eyes, two in front and two behind. Troubles and difficulties will come upon people, and upon the Israelites even more so.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ See above, 86 reference to the biblical context (Isaiah 63:1), and Talmudic one (b. Makkot (12a) of the Talmud), where the verse is attributed in a loanword to the Angel of Rome. This refers to the conquests of Nikephoros II Phokas and John I Tzimiskes, and especially to the events of 976. See Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, vol. 1, 309–310.

¹⁷⁰ The name of the Byzantine emperor of Armenian origin, Tzimiskes (in Armenian Cimsik), derives from the Armenian word *camusk*, which refers to a type of shoes and, according to one view, specifically red shoes. It should further be noted that the color red is associated with Rome and Christianity in Hebrew sources (purple was the color of the emperor's robes).

¹⁷¹ This is a reference to Muḥammad, whose common epithets in Judeo-Arabic and Judeo-Persian literature included “the disqualified one” (*pasul*), as it rhymes with *rasūl* (“apostle” or “prophet”). See Bar-Asher, *Linguistic Traditions*, 239–240, and the literature cited in the footnotes therein.

¹⁷² Shapira Appendix, 209 (= “Qışsa,” §§37–38; 349 [original] and 362 [Hebrew translation]).

We have already addressed the connections between QD and the Vision at length.¹⁷³ In both, the two enemies of the messiah are described in greater detail than in any of the other visions discussed here. In the Vision, like in the Syriac visions, they are given names. The first is called the Son of the Daughter of Levi, as in the Syriac visions, and the second is called by a name familiar from other apocalyptic visions—Armilus, son of the Female Figure. The mothers of the two enemies are thus mentioned explicitly: the daughter of Levi and the statue of a woman, made of marble, that was impregnated by Belial. The Son of the Daughter of Levi is a unique name for the enemy of the redeemer in all of Jewish eschatological literature.

In the Vision, whose description of the two enemies is the longest and most detailed, it is specifically the first enemy, the Son of the Daughter of Levi, who is a powerful, satanic figure. He is a man of fearsome appearance, resembling Armilus, the anti-messiah and the enemy of the world, who is familiar from other visions of redemption:

After all of these, the **Daughter of Levi** will become pregnant and **give birth to a son**; his stature will be fifteen cubits higher than the mountains; the Ishmaelites will be killed beforehand, and those who remain will flee to the wilderness of Paran. The Son of the Daughter of Levi will grow stronger, and all the Northerners along with him. And he will pitch his tent from East to West, which is the country of Babylon. In it they will kill three thousand and a thousand until the waters of the Tigris become dry and turn to blood. Those who come or go will have no respite from the drawn sword [accompanied by] looting and much plundering. The living will say to the dead, “Fortunate are you, for you are in graves.” And the Son of the Daughter of Levi will go forth with a large army, and everyone who sees him will flee before him.

And he will have many signs: He will be a hundred cubits tall and ten cubits wide, and the length of his nose will be one cubit. His hair will be long and blond; his eyes will be small, his teeth long, and his beard long, three cubits long. Woe and misery will befall all the people of the world from him and from dread of him. The whole world will say that he is the messiah, but he will not be.

And with him will be all the Northerners, and the Easterners and the Westerners as well, except for the Southerners, who will flee from him; and a remnant of the Ishmaelites will flee with them, and survivors of the sword along with them. And he will spread his net over all the inhabitants of the earth. Then **Gog and Magog** will hear and come to meet him; their signs are that each of them has four eyes, two in front and two behind, and they pressure the whole world. He chases Israel to destroy them, but the Holy One, blessed be He, will save them; and He will fight them and destroy them. (2a, 4–2b, 1, 2:1–5)¹⁷⁴

The description of the Son of the Daughter of Levi is followed by a closing formula and the statement “All the words I have said to you are [the] truth.” The text then proceeds to describe the other enemy of the messiah: Armilus, son of Belial.

¹⁷³ Ben-Sasson, “Messiahs and Anti-Messiahs,” 118–125.

¹⁷⁴ See Ben-Sasson, “Messiahs and Anti-Messiahs,” 161–162.

Although the author of the Vision has already announced that God will destroy the Son of the Daughter of Levi, he nonetheless depicts the two enemies as joining forces: “And I further tell you that the offspring of the female statue will join with the Son of the Daughter of Levi; his name is **Armilus, a son of Belial**, bleary-eyed.” Armilus is the familiar, typological figure of the enemy of humanity and the messiah, the son of a beautiful statue and Belial. The description of Armilus in the Vision of Daniel is more human than that of the Son of the Daughter of Levi and that of Armilus in other texts, and his deeds, as described here, are not as fearsome as theirs. As mentioned, in several other visions of redemption, the demonic description of Armilus more closely resembles that given of the Son of the Daughter of Levi here.

After Armilus joins the Son of the Daughter of Levi, the latter is no longer mentioned in the Vision; Armilus replaces him. The disappearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi from the text is not coincidental, nor is it an original part of the story of the end of days. In the Vision’s original ending, he was destroyed by God, and it seems that the extensive passage about Armilus was added after the conclusion of the Vision. This is indicated by Armilus’s “joining” the enemy of the messiah, the Son of the Daughter of Levi. I proposed that the Vision of Daniel was redacted by more than one redactor.¹⁷⁵ It might be that a later redactor added the figure of Armilus, the conventional enemy of the messiah, and transferred some of the traditions associated with him to the figure of the Son of the Daughter of Levi in the passage that describes the end of days in detail. The addition of Armilus also necessitated the composition of an appropriate conclusion for the Vision, and indeed, such a conclusion follows.

The fearsome appearance and deeds of the Son of the Daughter of Levi, and the scale of his auxiliary forces, produce an eschatological mood in the world.¹⁷⁶ Since the Son of the Daughter of Levi leads these proceedings, the sense that he is the messiah is understandable: “The whole world will say that he is the messiah, but he will not be.”

¹⁷⁵ See above, 94–105. In the first part of the Vision, it is possible to discern the work of an interpreter and organizer who added serial numbers, the names of rulers, and years of reign. In the passage dealing with Caliph Abū Djaʿfar al-Manṣūr, an interpretation has been added, but with a different ordering of the sentences. Near the end of the historical portion of the Vision, the text has been updated with a list of Fatimid rulers, thus postponing the end of days by adding additional rulers.

¹⁷⁶ On the mass slaughter, the stopping of the flow of the Tigris, and its overflowing in blood, compare Saʿadia Gaon, *Book of Beliefs and Opinions* §8, ch. 8; a description of events affecting the Euphrates appears in an apocalypse from the tenth century. See Gil, Zerubbabel, 15, 32, 59 (ll. 23–24), 60 (ll. 14–15), and the Judeo-Arabic original at 44–45 (The line numbering is identical in the original and in the Hebrew translation).

The extended description of the deeds of Armilus in the Vision of Daniel has links to images of the enemy of the redeemer in early Jewish apocalyptic works as well as to this figure in the three visions of Daniel discussed above. Although the author of the Vision does not spend time describing Armilus's appearance beyond his eyes, he nevertheless details the destruction that Armilus sows and describes at length Armilus's attempts to convince people that he is the messiah and to persuade them to accept him as their leader, a sort of second Moses, by means of his qualities and wondrous deeds:

And the Living God will send a righteous man from the children of Ephraim, who will go and gather the sages of Israel and bring them to Armilus the Edomite, the wicked son of Belial, and they will ask him: Are you Messiah? And he will say to them: I am Messiah, and I am your king and your redeemer. They will say to him: We ask for three signs from you. If you tell us, we will believe that you are Messiah. He will say to them: What are the signs that you ask? And they will say: The Staff of Moses, son of Amram, with which he performed signs in Egypt and turned the rivers to blood. And he will bring them a staff that resembles the Staff of Moses, and it will bud flower and yield almonds. And they will also tell him: Bring us the Jar of manna, and he will bring it to them.

Like the Son of the Daughter of Levi, Armilus will also be considered the messiah, and many Israelites will believe him, too, by virtue of the miracles that he performs. Two of them are miracles that Moses performed—the Staff and the Jar of Manna. Like his partner Armilus, the Son of the Daughter of Levi calls himself a sort of second Moses who saves Israel and brings the Staff of Moses and the Jar of Manna (requirements that appear already in the Book of Zerubbabel).

4.2 Two Enemies of the Savior in Apocalyptic Traditions

The two enemies of the messiah in these visions of Daniel are similar to one another in several respects, including the following: (a) they stand at the head of the enemies' camp; (b) they share many elements of their demonic appearance; (c) both claim that they are the messiah; (d) their figure reflects the figure of the redeemer; (e) they complement one another; (f) the chronological order of their actions is the same; and (g) they cause great ruin, with the destruction intensifying from one stage to the next.

The tradition of two enemies of the redeemer does not make its first appearance in the visions of Daniel discussed here; rather, it has earlier roots. Several early Jewish apocalyptic traditions mention two evil kings who precede the era of redemption, and it is not impossible that these descriptions are the indirect source for the Christian traditions, whether they address them directly or merely allude

to them. They originate in the words of Daniel in the final vision of the biblical book, which describes two kings, the King of the North and the King of the South, as follows: “The minds of both kings will be bent on evil; while sitting at the table together, they will lie to each other” (Dan 11:27). This description of their actions leaves ample room for a litany of misdeeds—religious, social, and economic.

Some have seen them as paralleling the wicked king who appears at the end of the Vision of the Beasts in chapters 7 and 8 of Daniel:

When their kingdoms are at an end, when the measure of transgression has been filled, then a king will arise, impudent and versed in intrigue. He will have great strength, but not through his own strength. He will be extraordinarily destructive; he will prosper in what he does and destroy the mighty and the people of holy ones. By his cunning, he will use deceit successfully. He will make great plans, will destroy many, taking them unawares, and will rise up against the chief of chiefs, but will be broken, not by [human] hands. (Dan 8:23–25)¹⁷⁷

This description is linked to Jewish traditions found in a first-century Jewish work with a Christian veneer—the Oracle of Hystaspes—and to an eschatological text from Qumran, the “Vision of the End of Days.”¹⁷⁸ The latter text, dated to the early first century CE, features two wicked kings. They precede the days of salvation of “the people of God,” and each oppresses and tramples many peoples, including Israel. The second king is greater than the first; he will cause more damage and distress than the first, and at first he will be considered the “son of God.”¹⁷⁹

Three Jewish apocalyptic works that are later than these works likewise describe two fearsome kings who precede the end of days, using descriptions that are similar to those in the four visions of Daniel discussed here. A late version of Branch A of the Book of Zerubbabel mentions the name Šērōy (Shahriyar), king of Persia, saying that he tormented Israel and killed Neḥemiah, son of Ḥushiel (Messiah ben Joseph). After this passage, which has been added to the original text of Zerubbabel, comes a description of Armilus, son of Belial, and the events in “Nineveh, the city of blood, which is mighty Rome.” In this version of the Book of Zerubbabel, each of the two anti-messiahs is described as clashing with a different

¹⁷⁷ On this chapter, and its link to chapter 7 of Daniel, see Segal, *Daniel*, 150–151, 168–171.

¹⁷⁸ See David Flusser, “The Hubris of the Antichrist in a Fragment from Qumran,” in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988), 207–213; David Flusser, “Hystaspes and John of Patmos,” in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988), 453; Knohl, “On the Son of God.”

¹⁷⁹ On document 4Q246, see Knohl, “On the Son of God.” Knohl, following Flusser, develops and deepens the link between the Oracle of Hystaspes and the Qumran text. The Oracle of Hystaspes also describes two wicked kings who precede salvation and links them to Rev 13, which describes two beasts and a beast with two horns.

messiah: the first with Messiah ben Joseph and the second with Messiah ben David. An anti-messiah king who precedes Armilus is also found in the seventh-century Book of Elijah, which likewise describes more than one enemy of the messiah. It mentions the last king of Persia, “a king who is the least of the kings, the son of a slave woman, the son of a washerwoman (*gigit* = tub).” He is followed by Gog and Magog. Armilus is not mentioned in the eighth-century *Nistarot De-Rashbi*: “a ruthless king ... and then the wicked kingdom will reign over Israel.”¹⁸⁰

In Christian traditions it is also possible to find descriptions of two anti-messiah figures. The earliest of them, the Book of Revelation (13:1, 11–14), describes two beasts that precede the coming of salvation and stamp their mark, physically, on the right hand or forehead of all whom they enslave.

Two forces of evil who wage war against the messiah continue to appear in Christian traditions from the second century onward. These traditions generally describe one of four figures: a scion of the tribe of Dan, the last pagan Roman emperor, the Antichrist, or Armilus. According to their separate respective traditions, the scion of the tribe of Dan and the last emperor repent and become part of Jesus’s entourage for the second coming, the Parousia.

Several later Christian visions of Daniel, written in the Byzantine sphere in the ninth century, describe two Antichrist figures: the one from the tribe of Dan and Armilus. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, they are characterized by their demonic appearance, their attempts to persuade people by disguising themselves as the messiah, the limited ability of a few faithful to withstand their temptations, and their Jewish origins. In one of them, “The Vision and Revelation of the Prophet Daniel,” the Antichrist is born from the coupling of a virgin and a fish.¹⁸¹

180 The Book of Zerubbabel, Constantinople version, in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 80–81, 379–380; *Nistarot De-Rashbi*, in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 195; the Book of Elijah, in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 42–45, 46–47. (cf. DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*, 87 n. 2). On the status of this version of the Book of Zerubbabel, see Hillel Newman, “Dating *Sefer Zerubavel*: Dehistoricizing and Rehistoricizing a Jewish Apocalypse of Late Antiquity,” *Adamantius* 19 (2013): 324–336; Newman, “Methodological Critique,” lxxii–lxxv, lxxix, and n. 53. Two anti-messiahs also appear in the later work *Pirkei Hekhalot*; see Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 368–389.

181 See Wilhelm Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche: Ein Beitrag zur Auslegung der Apocalypse* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895), 46–48 (=Wilhelm Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend: A Chapter in Christian and Jewish Folklore*, trans. Augustus H. Keane (London: Hutchinson, 1896), 171–174). According to Jewish and Christian traditions, the tribe of Dan was a tribe of warriors that stood courageously at the head of the military forces. Biblical verses attest to its strength, referring to the blessing of Jacob (Gen 49:16), the blessing of Moses (Deut 33:22), the might of Samson (Judg. 13–18), and the prophecy of Jeremiah (8:16). On the combining of the messiah’s enemies—the scion of the tribe of Dan and Armilus—in the Byzantine sphere in the ninth century, see “Diegesis Danielis” and “The Vision and

In Muslim traditions, as well, the earliest of which are assigned to the early seventh century, there is mention of named figures in connection with the enemy of the redeemer. Ibn Sayyād is described as al-Dajjāl, and a tradition ascribed to Tamīm al-Dārī speaks of a satanic figure imprisoned on a desert island, like Prometheus. A tradition from the early eighth century indicates a continuum between Ibn Sayyād and the Promethean prisoner on the island. Beginning in the eighth century, two named enemies of the messiah appear together once again: al-Sufyānī and al-Dajjāl.

In a ninth-century Muslim vision of Daniel (in which al-Dajjāl is described as having the words “denier of God” inscribed between his eyes), this pair precedes the arrival of the redeemer. There are traditions in which al-Sufyānī appears as two figures that arrive consecutively. Several scholars have suggested that the updated figure of al-Sufyānī as the enemy of the Savior is a reflection of political changes within the caliphate. Alongside the description of the anti-messiahs, a debate developed within Islamic tradition about who will wage war against them and kill them; the identification of al-Dajjāl as a Jew meant that the one who fights him could not be a Muslim, for a Muslim must honor his duty of protection. According to this tradition, the task of killing al-Dajjāl is given to a non-Muslim—namely, Jesus, who will accomplish it upon his second coming, before his becoming Muslim and Muḥammad’s second coming.¹⁸²

Revelation of the Prophet Daniel,” in DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 133–144 (§§2.10–2.11; the description of Armilus as the king of the Jews, born from the coupling of a virgin and a fish, appears on p. 133); on the last Roman emperor, followed by the Antichrist, see “The Vision of the Prophet Daniel on the Emperors” in DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 145–151 (§2.13); on the Roman emperor who appears before the Antichrist and Gog and Magog, see Jos M. van Lent, “The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel,” 179–184 (§2.21). For a summary of the typical structure of Byzantine visions of Daniel that mention the Antichrist and Gog and Magog, see DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 203.

182 On Ibn Sayyād and the “Promethean” Dajjāl, see David J. Halperin, “The Ibn Sayyād Traditions,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 96.2 (1976): 213–225. On al-Sufyānī and al-Dajjāl, see Edward J. Jenkinson, “The Muslim Antichrist,” *Muslim World* 20 (1930): 50–55; Cook, *Studies*, 50–55, 320–321. On the outward appearance of the anti-messiah in Islam, see Jean-Marc Rosenstiehl, “Le portrait de l’Antichrist,” *Pseudépigraphes de l’Ancien Testament et manuscrits de la mer Morte*, ed. Marc Philonenko et al. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967), 45–60; Horst-Dieter Rauh, *Das Bild des Antichrists im Mittelalter* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973). On the wonders and appearance of al-Dajjāl, see Cook, *Studies*, 100–102. On the appearance of al-Sufyānī and al-Dajjāl in the ninth-century vision of Daniel, see Cook, “Muslim Daniel Apocalypse”; below, 126–127 (on the Son of the Daughter of Levi from Beit She’an). The two al-Sufyānī figures who will appear before the advent of salvation are mentioned by Arṭāt b. al-Mundhir. See Madelung, “Sufyānī between Tradition and History,” Madelung, “al-Sufyānī.” On al-Sufyānī, see below, 130–131, nn. 200 and 202.

This brief inquiry shows that the appearance of two anti-messiahs is common in the apocalyptic texts of all three religions and is not limited to the four visions of Daniel discussed in the first section of the chapter. The unique feature of three of these four is the anti-messiah figure called the Son of the Daughter of Levi, who precedes the arrival of the more terrible enemy.

4.3 The Daughter of Levi and Her Son

4.3.1 The Daughter of Levi in the Syriac Traditions

In the two Syriac visions and in the Vision of Daniel, the description of the first enemy of the redeemer begins with the language of the biblical verse that describes the relationship between Moses's parents: "A certain man of the house of Levi went and married **the Daughter of Levi**. The woman conceived and **bore a son**" (Exod 2:1–2). These verses presage the reader's first encounter with the herald of redemption from Egypt, Moses. Indeed, Moses's image as the greatest prophet and leader—the redeemer from Egypt who shapes the contours of the people of the Jewish religion, who died in a singular manner, and whose burial place is not known—is familiar from the heritage of the three monotheistic religions. Israel J. Yuval has dealt extensively with the messianic legacy associated with Moses in Judaism and Christianity and examined traditions about his future return—his second coming—to the stage of history.¹⁸³ Yuval has demonstrated that already in early Jewish works there is discussion about Moses's divinity versus his mundanity. He has even shown that in the first Christian works, Moses is the model for Jesus, and belief in Jesus replaces belief in the Torah of Moses (2 Cor 3:12–18; Heb 3:3–6). There, the prospect of Moses's second appearance before the return of Jesus is discussed.¹⁸⁴

In the context of clarifying Jesus's priesthood, some early Eastern Christian traditions and commentaries on Luke 1:5, 36, Heb 7:13–14, and Diatessaron 1:25 trace Jesus's lineage to the tribe of Levi. According to Luke, Elizabeth, Zechariah's wife and the mother of John the Baptist, was from an Aaronite family within the tribe of

¹⁸³ Israel J. Yuval, "Moses Redivivus: Maimonides as a 'Helper to the King' Messiah," *Zion* 72 (2007): 161–188 [Hebrew]. Yuval weaves a thick web of description around the figure of Moses in a messianic context, in connection with the new interpretation that he proposes of Maimonides as a "Second Moses." On Moses and "another Moses" in relation to messianic beliefs, see Mordechai A. Friedman, *Maimonides, the Messiah in Yemen, and Forced Conversion* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute Press, 2002), 195–199 [Hebrew].

¹⁸⁴ Yuval, "Moses Redivivus," 168–169.

Levi, and Mary was a relative of Elizabeth. However, already in the third century, polemical texts vehemently denied that Mary belonged to the tribe of Levi.

Since the Christian traditions are the first to relate to the Son of the Daughter of Levi as an enemy of the messiah, and since these traditions seem to be the source for the Jewish and Muslim traditions, the question of how the Son of the Daughter of Levi became an enemy of the messiah persists first and foremost within the Christian context.

The source of the two Syriac Daniel visions seems to have an agenda beyond the demonization of the Son of the Daughter of Levi and to allude to some debate or dispute. It may be possible to explain the development of the figure of the Son of the Daughter of Levi as an enemy of the redeemer specifically within Christian traditions by means of a major issue within early Christian theology.

According to this proposal, the figure of the redeemer's enemy is linked to an intense polemic within early Christian exegesis of the lineage of Mary, mother of Jesus, concerning whether Jesus was of priestly pedigree. This would mean that Jesus is of Levite lineage in addition to Judahite lineage. Two key elements form the basis of the question of Jesus's priestly lineage: the discussion of Melchizedek, who was priest to God Most High (Heb 7:13–14), and the annunciation of the births of John and Jesus, in connection with the elaboration of Mary's lineage (Luke 1:5, 36). Whereas the verses that relate to Melchizedek's priesthood make it clear that this priesthood is not descended from the tribe of Levi, the annunciation raises the question of Mary's Levite descent. Luke 1:5 describes the annunciation of the nativity of John to the priest Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth, also of priestly lineage. Verse 36 of the same chapter describes the angel Gabriel's annunciation of Jesus's nativity to Mary, and in this context Gabriel states that Mary's **kinswoman**, Elizabeth, is also pregnant. Some concluded from this that Mary was also from the tribe of Levi.

The debate between those who accepted Mary's Levite lineage and those who denied it was not marginal; it had implications for Jesus's status in his own time and at the end of days and his expected second coming. Jesus's Judahite ancestry was through Joseph, who was not his biological father. His ancestry through his pedigreed mother should have secured him a superior status. For this reason, some maintained that Mary also was of Judahite stock—through her paternal or maternal lineage. According to Christian tradition, Nahshon (Naason), son of Aminadav, of the tribe of Judah, married Elisheva (Elizabeth), **daughter** of the High Priest Aaron. (This genealogy is incompatible with Exodus 6:23, which states that Aaron married Elisheva, daughter of Aminadav, the **sister** of Nahshon.) Either way, the additional genealogy of Mary, which appears incidentally in Luke, allowed for more interpretive possibilities than the conventional lineage of Jesus through Joseph—as Jewish lineage is generally listed along the paternal line.

Already in the third century, polemical texts were written to deny vociferously that Mary belonged to the tribe of Levi. The discussion of Mary's connection to the tribe of Levi already appears in the Syriac and Armenian commentaries to the Diatessaron (1:25–26). The Syriac commentary explains at relative length that Mary's kinship to Elizabeth does not necessarily mean that Mary was a Levite, if they were not daughters of a Levite father. The Armenian commentary differs in one essential aspect; it characterizes Mary and Elizabeth as **sisters** and discusses their Levite descent and Jesus's dual lineage, from the tribe of Levi—and hence his link to the priesthood—on Mary's side, and to Judah on Joseph's side, the side that would have determined tribal affiliation according to Jewish tradition. The question of Mary's Levite lineage continues to occupy exegesis even today.¹⁸⁵

Julius Africanus (late second century) devoted a brief discussion to “genealogy in the holy gospels” and to the various interpretations within the detailed discussion of Mary's lineage. This includes the attribution of Jesus's family to the tribes of Levi and Judah, name changes, marriages between members of priestly and royal families, and genealogical conventions—all to grant Jesus the authority of both priest and king. In Julius Africanus's view, the contrived and superfluous efforts involved in these genealogical studies are religious trivialities, and Jesus's kingship and priesthood should not be established on their basis.¹⁸⁶

Epiphanius (mid-fourth century) addresses the same point even more clearly:

Thus long ago the head of the tribe of Judah, Naason, took <the> ancient Elizabeth, Aaron's daughter, to wife during the exodus. Hence many sects are unaware of <the> Savior's earthly genealogy, and because of their puzzlement disbelieve, and suppose that they can contradict the truth by saying “How could Mary, of the tribe of David and Judah, be related to Elizabeth, of the tribe of Levi?”¹⁸⁷

A manuscript from St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai contains a detailed discussion of the Virgin Mary's genealogy and presents the possibility of ascribing Jesus to

¹⁸⁵ Christian Lange, “The Descent of Mary and the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron,” *The Harp* 15 (2002): 107–116; Christian Lange, *The Portrayal of Christ in the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 37–42; Sebastian P. Brock, “The Genealogy of the Virgin Mary in Sinai Syr. 16,” in *Universum Hagiographicum: Mémoial R.P. Michel van Esbroeck s.j.*, eds. Basil Lourié, and Alexey Mouraviev (St. Petersburg: Byzantinorossica, 2006), 58–71; Yifat Monnickendam, *Jewish Law and Early Christian Identity: Betrothal, Marriage, and Infidelity in the Writings of Ephrem the Syrian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 67–81.

¹⁸⁶ Letter to Aristides, §§1033–6, in Brock, “Virgin Mary,” 62–65.

¹⁸⁷ *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Books II and III (Sects 47–80 De Fide)*, trans. Frank Williams (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 626, <https://archive.org/details/panarionofepipha0000epip/page/626/mode/2up>, accessed May 28, 2024.

the tribe of Levi. The age of this manuscript is disputed, with some dating it to the late eighth or early ninth century, and others dating it much earlier, to the fourth century. It states:

For this reason, it is written that the Angel said to Mary, “Behold, Elisabeth your relative has conceived” (Luke 1:36)—that is, the sister of your mother. Now Mary from her father’s side was from the tribe of Judah, but from her mother’s side, from the tribe of Levi. Then the (tribes) were intermingled after the return from the Babylonian captivity through divine providence, so that our Saviour might be seen as being from both of them, in order that, through his kingship, the kingship of Judah might become ineffective, and through his priesthood, the (same would apply to the) priesthood of Levi. It is (thus) said that “he arose from Judah” (Hebrews 7:14), on his father’s side, for his mother’s genealogy, according to the custom of the Hebrews, reckons from the husband, and not from the wife.¹⁸⁸

These deliberations are echoed in Jacob of Edessa (d. 708), who says in one of his letters:

There are some narratives written by **certain zealous people** on their own authority, without having any testimonies from Scripture, which show that Mary, the holy Virgin, the mother of Christ, was the daughter of Hanna and of the upright Ioakin, concerning whom those who authored the narratives say that he was the son of Panther, and Panther was the brother of Melki, the son of Yani (Luke 3:24) who descends from the lineage of Levi in the genealogy. He was living in the region of Galilee, in the vicinity of the place where the town of Tiberias was built.¹⁸⁹

The additional explanation proposed is therefore that the source of the two Syriac visions depicts the Son of the Daughter of Levi neither as a counterpart to Moses nor in the context of the aforementioned verse from Exodus, but intentionally as a demon, in order to put an end to the debate about Mary’s pedigree and to firmly establish Jesus’s lineage from the tribe of Judah alone, through both Joseph and Mary, as most exegetes interpreted Luke. The author of the source, by portraying the Son of the Daughter of Levi as the adversary of the savior, employed a common strategy for genealogical polemics; instead of reexamining names, marriage ties, and the roles of the savior, he precluded the possibility of interpreting Mary as a daughter of the tribe of Levi, thus eliminating the option of attributing Levite descent to Jesus. The author accomplished this by asserting that any son of a daughter of Levi who claims to be the messiah is, in fact, the redeemer’s demonic enemy. The similarity between the Antichrist and the savior lies in the deceptive nature

¹⁸⁸ Brock, “Virgin Mary,” 58–59.

¹⁸⁹ Brock, “Virgin Mary,” 60–61.

of his character, and the description of this similarity is not an innovation of the visions of Daniel. The use of the figure of the Antichrist to block the assertion of Jesus's connection to the tribe of Levi, which was considered heretical, was seen as a secure and decisive way to conclude the debate.¹⁹⁰

It could be, therefore, that what underpins the source, and consequently the visions, is a desire to dissociate Jesus decisively from any Levitical association by portraying the Son of the Daughter of Levi as Jewish and as the Antichrist. This stance parallels and may indeed have been built on the insistence on Mary's non-Levitical lineage.

Another, more cautious possibility is to view these references as reflections of an antiquarian interest, providing information out of curiosity, without any underlying agenda. In any event, these two polemical traditions—one affirming Jesus's descent from Levi (through Mary's mother) and one rejecting it and condemns it as heresy—demonstrate that the idea of Jesus being the Son of a Daughter of the tribe of Levi was known in the East. The source of the two Syriac visions could therefore have easily utilized them.

In the Muslim tradition, too, the figure of Moses is exemplary, paralleling Muḥammad and representing the highest level of humanity. The personality and deeds of Moses occupy a central place in the Quran, he is mentioned therein more than any other prophet, and his life story is told at great length. He, together with Noah and Abraham, is considered one of the first believers, and parallels are drawn between him and Muḥammad.¹⁹¹

Indeed, Moses was the name (or moniker) of several messiahs throughout the medieval era.¹⁹² The first attestation of a messianic Moses comes from the fourth-century Socrates Scholasticus:

190 Similar efforts to taint or invalidate lineages are well-documented in ancient literature. Such was the disqualification of anyone claiming to be from the Hasmonean line, which the Talmud applies to descendants of Herod; the passage in *b Sanh.* 43, which ridicules the messianic names of Jesus's disciples, which allude to his Davidic pedigree; and anyone claiming royal lineage in connection with descendants of the Exilarch Bustanai, who, as claimed by traditions from the Geonic period, married a Persian woman Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries*, 58–81. This phenomenon coexists with many examples of fabricated genealogies in Islamic tradition, as Arabs have always “devoted much attention to studying and tainting genealogies.” The later story about the “Jewish” pope who sought to undermine the lineage of Anacletus II serves as another example.

191 Uri Rubin, *Between Jerusalem and Mecca: Sanctity and Salvation in the Quran and the Islamic Tradition* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2019), 95–98; 181–182 [Hebrew].

192 See Yuval, “Moses Redivivus.” To the list that he provides should be added two messiahs who appeared during the second half of the ninth century and were also called Moses: Abū 'Imrān Mūsā al-Za'farānī (al-Tiflīsī) and Moses/Meshwi/Mishawayh al-Ukbarī/al-Ba'albakī. On them, see Gil, *Kingdom of Ishmael*, vol. 1, 246–247; Yoram Erder, *The Karaite Mourners of Zion and the Qumran*

About this period, a significant number of Jews who dwelt in Crete were converted to Christianity, through the following disastrous circumstance. A certain Jewish impostor pretended that he was Moses, and had been sent from heaven to lead out the Jews inhabiting that island, and conduct them through the sea: for he said that he was the same person who formerly preserved the Israelites by leading them through the Red Sea. During a whole year, therefore, he perambulated the several cities of the island and persuaded the Jews to believe such assurances. He moreover bid them renounce their money and other property, pledging himself to guide them through a dry sea into the land of promise. Deluded by such expectations, they neglected business of every kind, despising what they possessed, and permitting anyone who chose to take it. When the day appointed by this deceiver for their departure had arrived, he himself took the lead, and all followed with their wives and children. He led them, therefore, until they reached a promontory that overhung the sea, from which he ordered them to fling themselves headlong into it. Those who came first to the precipice did so, and were immediately destroyed, some of them being dashed in pieces against the rocks, and some drowned in the waters: and more would have perished, had not the Providence of God led some fishermen and merchants who were Christians to be present. These people drew out and saved some who were almost drowned, who then, in their perilous situation, became sensible of the madness of their conduct. The rest they hindered from casting themselves down by telling them of the destruction of those who had taken the first leap. When at length the Jews perceived how fearfully they had been duped, they blamed first of all their own indiscreet credulity and then sought to lay hold of the pseudo-Moses in order to put him to death. But they were unable to seize him, for he suddenly disappeared, which induced a general belief that it was some malignant fiend who had assumed a human form for the destruction of their nation in that place. In consequence of this experience, many of the Jews in Crete at that time, abandoning Judaism, attached themselves to the Christian faith.¹⁹³

In the episode involving Moses of Crete, the timing of the incident (Passover) and the essential experience of jumping into the sea are also significant. Jewish tradition also preserves several fourth-century calculations of the end of days.

Scrolls: On the History of an Alternative to Rabbinic Judaism (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 2004), 176–316. The latter is a detailed discussion of the radical teachings of Mishawayh al-'Ukbari. Mishawayh proposed reforms and innovations to various commandments, and permissive rulings on matters of sexuality are attributed to him. He garnered a great deal of attention in his time and was the focus of Karaite and Rabbanite criticism.

193 Socrates Scholasticus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VII.38, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ser. 2, vol. 2, eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wallace (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Nicene_and_Post-Nicene_Fathers:_Series_II/Volume_II/Socrates/Book_VII/Chapter_38, accessed May 31, 2024. On this attestation and on other calculations of the end of days that relate to the late fourth century, see Irshai, “If You See Kingdoms Struggling,” xvi–xvii; Irshai, “Dating the Eschaton,” 145–146; Robert L. Wilken, “The Restoration of Israel in Biblical Prophecy: Christian and Jewish Responses in the Early Byzantine Period,” in *To See Ourselves as Others See Us: Christians, Jews, “Others” in Late Antiquity*, eds. Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs (Chico, CA: Scholar Press, 1985), 453; Yuval, “Moses Redivivus,” 163–164.

To Christian eyes, such circumstances were problematic, as they announced the arrival of the Messiah, identified him as a public leader, and established that the Jews saw him as Moses and not, as the Christians expected, as Jesus. They undermined the primary foundations of the Christian conception of the messiah, and they could serve as a warning sign. Even if the self-declared messiah in Crete failed miserably, the *potential* contained in the recurring appearance of a messiah bearing the name Moses could still be realized in the future. One way in which Christian faithful to the Christian vision of redemption could address this challenge was by declaring that the messianic claimant was nothing but the Jewish inverse of the messiah—the Jewish Antichrist.

Since a Jewish messiah named Moses could attract many believing Christians, seduce them into following him, persuade them to fulfill his instructions, and lead them astray from the true faith, it was necessary to negate his authority absolutely at the moment of his appearance. Identifying him as the Antichrist would explain his special abilities to potential believers and to outside observers, establish his figure as monstrous, and define the essence of his activities, which seemed messianic, as the actions of a dangerous, satanic enemy of whom one must be wary. The trend to counter the recurring return of Moses as the Messiah by presenting him as the Antichrist avoided calling him explicitly by the name Moses by alluding to him instead with an alarming description: the Son of the Daughter of Levi. This moniker could leave the stature of the canonical Moses intact while encouraging the suspicion that any other Moses who claimed to be the messiah was the Antichrist.

It thus appears that the Son of the Daughter of Levi was described as the Jewish Antichrist in one Eastern Christian tradition, which may have been influenced by and emerged soon after the episode of Moses of Crete. This tradition could then give rise to the two nearly identical and (thus far) singular descriptions in the Syriac visions of Daniel.

4.3.2 The Daughter of Levi and Her Son in Muslim Tradition

The Son of the Daughter of Levi is also mentioned in a Muslim apocalyptic tradition. In a work by Ibrāhīm b. Abī 'Abla, cited by Nu'aym b. Ḥammād al-Marwazī (d. 843), who was a contemporary of the Jewish author of the Vision of Daniel, a similar tradition, likewise unique, is quoted and worked into the Muslim image of the end of days. The text declares that “before the appearance of the Dajjāl, a **son** will be born in Baysan (Beit She'an) from the **tribe of Levi**, son of Jacob, with markings of weaponry on his body: a sword, a shield, a lance, and a knife.”¹⁹⁴ Nu'aym notes that

¹⁹⁴ Nu'aym, *Tribulations*, 325 (trans. 1450); Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 89, n. 121.

he drew his traditions from both Jewish and Christian sources. Alexandra Cuffel, who has dealt extensively with this work, concluded that it reflects polemics and dialogue that took place in Late Antiquity and the early medieval era between Jews and bearers of Christian apocalyptic traditions. These traditions were interconnected long before they were adopted by Muslims and quoted in their writings.

In Cuffel's view, Nu'aym's description of the Dajjāl's camp and his Jewish environment is based on Christian sources that claim that the Antichrist is of Jewish origin (like the Christian sources that assign him to the lost tribe of Dan), and in his portrayal, the camp (like that of the Antichrist) includes Jewish enlistees. However, Nu'aym also reports that the Dajjāl's camp consists of the children of prostitutes, and that the Dajjāl himself was born with a statue inside him. According to Cuffel, these descriptions were influenced by specifically Jewish apocalyptic works, such as the Book of Zerubbabel and traditions concerning the birth of Jesus—specifically, the Book of Zerubbabel's description of the birth of the savior's enemy from a statue (Armilus, Son of the Female Figure) and the traditions in the Talmud, *midrashim*, and *Toledot Yeshu* that mock the notion of virgin birth and criticize the licentious conduct of Mary/ Miriam, the mother of Jesus, in narratives that clash with the Christian gospels.¹⁹⁵

It thus seems that the idea of the Jewish entourage of the Dajjāl, who was born in Beit She'an to a woman from the tribe of Levi, son of Jacob, was taken from the Syriac visions of Daniel or from sources that they drew upon. The demonic descriptions of the Dajjāl could have come from the same visions of Daniel. In turn, the Syriac visions of Daniel or a shared earlier source described the Son of the Daughter of Levi as the Antichrist, having been affected by the appearance of a Jewish messiah bearing the name Moses, who performed miracles similar to those performed by the biblical Moses. Identifying him as the Antichrist could help forestall future claims by messianic pretenders bearing the name Moses. The thus far singular appearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi in a Muslim source and a Jewish source in connection with the enemies of the redeemer reinforces the ascription of the Jewish Vision of Daniel to the Syrian sphere. This ascription is discussed at

¹⁹⁵ Alexandra Cuffel, "Jewish Tribes and Women in the Genesis and Battle of the Dajjāl: Nu'ayim Ibn Ḥammād Al-Khuzā'ī Al-Marwzī's Kitāb Al-Fitan," in *Peoples of the Apocalypse: Eschatological Beliefs and Political Scenarios*, eds. Wolfram Brandes, Felicitas Schmieder, and Rebekka Voß (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 129–146 (and especially 133–134). Cuffel emphasizes the synthesis of the eschatological future with moral and political commentary about the present. On the one hand, Jews become the ultimate enemies of Islam, on whom one cannot rely. On the other hand, there is evidence of positive conceptions of Jews in the ninth century. Schmoldt, *Die Schrift*, maintains that the inclusion of the Daughter of Levi in the lineage is a sign of Young Daniel's author's connection to Judaism. See also Brock, "Small/Young Daniel," 251–252.

length, in connection with the “prophecies after the event” that it describes, in the article accompanying the initial publication of the Vision.¹⁹⁶

4.3.3 The Daughter of Levi, Her Son, and His Demonic Appearance in Jewish Tradition

The section of the Jewish Vision of Daniel that describes the enemies of the messiah begins thus: “After all of these, the **Daughter of Levi** will become pregnant and **give birth to a son**.” However, even if the Syriac Christian traditions and Muslim traditions depict the Son of the Daughter of Levi as the enemy of the messiah and intentionally characterize him as Jewish and as a “returned Moses” figure claiming to be the final redeemer, this identification is impossible in a Jewish context. In the Vision, the Son of the Daughter of Levi, the enemy of the messiahs (both ben Joseph and ben David), is a satanic figure who persecutes the people of Israel, whereas Moses himself is described at length in the concluding chapter of that vision, specifically as one of the saviors:

And Abraham will sit on the right, and Moses will sit to the left, and they will all enter Jerusalem joyfully, and they will say to Moses: Look! This is your people, the flock you pastured! And Abraham and Moses will walk before you, and the Living God will bring down the manna for them, as of yore.¹⁹⁷

The author of the Vision of Daniel adopts the figure of the Son of the Daughter of Levi as the enemy of the messiah, but he departs from the Syriac Christian and Muslim traditions that identify this figure as a Jew. He portrays the Son of the Daughter of Levi as the enemy of the messiah on the basis of Judeo-Christian traditions and especially the Muslim traditions that developed from them regarding Moses and his family. The author of the Vision, who lived in Muslim Syria in the ninth century, received these apocalyptic traditions, imbued them with a uniquely Jewish dimension, and inverted the image of the central character: in his telling, the enemy of the messiah, the Antichrist, is none other than Jesus Christ, as I will now demonstrate.

The identification of the Son of the Daughter of Levi with the enemy of the messiah in the Vision is enabled by the inversion of the figures of the redeemer and his enemies, and specifically by the synthesis of Christian and Muslim traditions. Quranic tradition identifies Miriam (sister of Moses) with Mary, the mother

¹⁹⁶ Ben-Sasson, “Messiahs and Anti-Messiahs.”

¹⁹⁷ Yuval, “Moses Redivivus,” 169–170, n. 29.

of Jesus. Miriam (Maryam) is the only woman named explicitly in the Quran. She is mentioned more frequently in the Quran (34 times) than in the New Testament (19 times). On two occasions, the Quran notes that she is the daughter of Amram (“bint ‘Imrān”)—at 3:35 and in Sura 19, which is devoted to and named for her. Verse 19:28 states that she is the sister of Aaron (Hārūn). In every other Quranic mention, it is clear that the name Maryam refers to Mary, the mother of Jesus. The identification of Moses with Jesus and the linkage of their combined figure with Mary/Miriam/Maryam was available to anyone exposed to Muslim and Christian apocalyptic material. The linkage of these two traditions enabled the identification of the Daughter of Levi as the mother of Jesus, and of her son Jesus as the “second Moses.”¹⁹⁸

Scholars disagree on whether the Quran draws on an earlier tradition that merges Mary, the mother of Jesus, with Miriam, the sister of Moses, or whether its author merely did not understand the Christian sermons in the New Testament that seek to present Jesus as a “second Moses.” Whatever the text’s intention, it produced an association between Jesus’s mother and Moses’s sister in the eyes of its readers. In this tradition, Miriam is the daughter of Amram and the sister of Aaron—a daughter of the tribe of Levi, as Moses’s mother is described in Exod 2:1–2.¹⁹⁹ Thus,

198 See Yuval, “Moses Redivivus,” 166–167. I am grateful to Yuval for his special contribution to this section of the discussion. (On this, see also the introductory footnote to Ben-Sasson, “Messiahs and Anti-Messiahs.”)

199 On traditions about Mary/Miriam/Maryam, see Gilles Dorival, “Is Maryam, Sister of Aaron, the Same as Maryam, the Mother of Jesus? Quran 19:28 Revisited,” *Scriptures, Sacred Traditions, and Strategies of Religious Subversion: Studies in Discourse with the Work of Guy G. Stroumsa*, eds. Moshe Blidstein, Serge Ruzer, and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 103–112; Avraham Grossman, “How Was Miriam the Ideal Female Figure in Rabbinic Literature?” (on Miriam as a maternal ancestor of the messiah), in *Tiferet le-Yisrael: Jubilee Volume in Honor of Israel Francus*, eds. Joel Roth, Menahem Schmelzer, and Yaacov Francus (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 2010), 189–191 [Hebrew]; Michael Marx, “Glimpses of a Mariology in the Qur’an: From Hagiography to Theology Via Religious-Political Debate,” *The Qur’an in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur’ānic Milieu*, eds. Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 533–564; Geoffrey Parrinder, *Jesus in the Qur’an* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1965), 60–66. I am grateful to Meir Bar-Asher for the reference to Parrinder’s work. On the synthesis of traditions in the figure of the messiah’s mother, see the discussion of the figure and significance of Hepzibah in the Book of Zerubbabel, which is linked (by lineage) to the figure of David, in Martha Himmelfarb, “The Mother of the Messiah in the Talmud Yerushalmi and Sefer Zerubbabel,” *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, vol. 3, ed. Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 369–389; Dan, *History of Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 2, 1008–1012 (a discussion of Jesus and Miriam, following studies by Galit Hasan-Rokem and Martha Himmelfarb, appears in n. 22). Parenthetically, Oded Irshai suggests that there is an essential link between the figure of the Daughter of Levi and the figures of Hepzibah and of the stone statue,

according to the Quranic tradition, the Son of the Daughter of Levi could be identified with Jesus.

In the Quran, the son of Miriam is ʿĪsā, Jesus. The Quran states that he was the messiah, who performed miracles from the moment of his birth until his future appearance at the eschaton. This reappearance is based on the Christian concept of the second coming, the Parousia.

In his aforementioned study, Yuval proposes viewing Moses as an archetype for Jesus. The identification of Miriam (a daughter of the tribe of Levi) with the mother of Jesus, in accordance with Muslim tradition, indicates the possibility that the author of the Vision, living in northern Syria at the site of the encounter between Byzantium and the caliphate, drew on the Christian tradition that viewed Jesus as a “second Moses.” The Gospel of Matthew already evinces an attempt to shape the story of Jesus’s birth in accordance with motifs from the story of Moses’s birth; Jesus is likened to a “second Moses” who surpasses the first. In the story of the Transfiguration (Matt 17:1–9), Jesus is portrayed as being greater than Moses and Elijah: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (v. 5, New International Version). This depiction contrasts with that of Moses, who is called a “servant of the Lord” (Deut 34:5).

The word “messiah” (*al-masīḥ*) appears eleven times in the Quran, always with reference to Jesus: *al-Masīḥ ʿĪsā b. Maryam*.²⁰⁰ The three miracles he performs attest to his being the messiah:

the mother of Armilus, from the Book of Zerubbabel. According to him, the anonymization of the Daughter of Levi is evidence of an attempt to conform to an existing topos, which in the Byzantine context had a gender-related meaning of its own, and in the Arab-Muslim context (such as in the text under discussion) carried other meanings. On the conformity of later traditions with existing topoi, see, for example: Oded Irshai, “The Earthquake in the Valley of Arbel’: A Galilean Apocalyptic Tradition and its Historical-Liturgical Context,” in *Textures: Culture, Literature, Folklore for Galit Hasan-Rokem*, eds. Hagar Salamon and Avigdor Shinan (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2013), 107–132 (and especially 113–114 and n. 15).

200 He is mentioned as the messiah in the following verses: Q 3:40; 4:156, 169, 170; 5:19 (twice), 76 (twice), 79; 9:30, 31. Regarding the miracle of breathing life into clay birds, which the Quran attributes to Jesus (3:49), and the inspiration for the Quranic description in the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, see Oscar Cullmann, “The Infancy Story of Thomas,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1, *Gospels and Related Writings*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 393. For a discussion of 3:49 and other details in that Sura, which contains clear parallels to apocryphal Christian material, see Ali Amir-Moezzi and Guillaume Dye, *Le Coran des Historiens: Commentaire et analyse du texte coranique*, vol. 2 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2019), 144–145; Rudi Paret, *Der Koran: Kommentar und Konkordanz* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1989), 69. Many scholars have pointed out that much of what the Quran says about Christianity originates in apocryphal Christian materials (Meir Bar-Asher, personal communication).

And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel, And will make him a messenger unto the Children of Israel, (saying): Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it, and it is a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave. And I announce unto you what ye eat and what ye store up in your houses. Lo! herein verily is a portent for you, if ye are to be believers.²⁰¹

As suggested (above, 124–126), the appearance of a false messiah, such as that in Crete, and his presentation of himself as a second Moses and as the ultimate redeemer put the Christian notion of Jesus's second coming to the test. Bearers of the Syriac Christian apocalyptic tradition would thus quickly identify the messianic Moses as a demonic Antichrist. For traditionalist Muslims such as Ibrāhīm b. Abī 'Abla and Nu'aym, the identification of the enemy of the messiah as a Jew would have dovetailed with other traditions about the Dajjāl. Since he is not explicitly referred to as Moses but rather is called by his mother's name, the Jewish Son of the Daughter of Levi could be incorporated into Islam as well, as a member of the Dajjāl's entourage.

In the Jewish Vision of Daniel, we find the Jewish inversion of this conception. Jesus, son of Miriam, daughter of Levi, will reappear in the future not as the messiah (the Christ) but as the enemy of the messiah (the Antichrist). This maneuver, by which the messiah of one tradition becomes the anti-messiah of another, is typical of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim apocalyptic literature. The author of the Vision has thus internalized both conceptions relating to Moses—the Quranic conception that identifies the first Moses with the second Moses and the Christian conception of Jesus's second coming—and has turned them on their heads. This inversion makes use of a previously deployed device: redefining a messianic figure (Moses) as an anti-messiah (the Son of the Daughter of Levi) by using an epithet that was already in use in Syria among Christians and Muslims alike. The author of the Vision simply altered the identity of the Son of the Daughter of Levi from the Jewish Moses to the Christian Jesus.

The Vision thus draws on two elements suited to the inversion of the Christian and Muslim figure of Jesus—namely, the performance of miracles and the claiming to be the messiah. To this description we can add the demonic elements found in ancient Jewish and Christian traditions that describe Gog and Magog and Armilus.

The description of the Son of the Daughter of Levi also combines Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions. It fits with descriptions of the Antichrist in the Christian tradition as well as of the Muslim anti-messiah, al-Masiḥ al-Dajjāl. These traditions

201 Q 3:48–49 (Arberry translation).

contain detailed descriptions of the human figures of Satan, Belial, the Antichrist, and the enemies of the messiah (and of humankind). The Antichrist appears with a hairy face, a right eye like the morning star, and a left one akin to a quail or a lion, a mouth a cubit wide, broad gaps between his teeth, fingers crooked like a scythe, wide feet, and the word Antichrist inscribed on his forehead. His body is described as gigantic and asymmetrical. His abnormal body shape and the destruction that he wreaks serve to provoke fear and panic. The seductive wives deployed by the Antichrist in order to be accepted as the messiah are also part of the description: he is a miracle-worker and the embodiment of Jesus's second coming. Such descriptions are found in Christian apocryphal literature from the second century onward.²⁰²

The Muslim description of al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl, the false messiah who will rise against Islam at the end of days, is similar. He, too, is described as a person with a singular, strange, repulsive appearance: he has a massive body, a ruddy face, one eye, the word *kāfir* (denier [of God]) inscribed on his forehead, and curly hair; he rides on a she-ass and originated among the Jews of Isfahan. The Dajjāl, too, will try to perform miracles to convince people that he is the messiah; he will bring forth a mountain of food and a river of water. He will kill and attempt to resurrect the dead. He kills Enoch and Elijah (who testify against him), but they come back to life—and not by the power of the Dajjāl.²⁰³

The transition from messianic figure (Moses/Jesus) to the messiah's enemy, the Son of the Daughter of Levi (Moses/Jesus), is described in the Syriac visions of Daniel, in the work of Nu'aym, and in the Jewish Vision of Daniel. In the Vision, figures from the other two worlds are combined together: the Son of the Daughter of Levi is a synthetic anti-messiah figure based on the inversion of the figure of Jesus at the

202 These descriptions are found in early apocalyptic works, including 2 Esdras, the Armenian Seventh Vision of Daniel, Clement of Alexandria, and others. On them, and on the bidirectional flow of motifs concerning the appearance and actions of the anti-messiah between religions and cultures, see Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung*, 101–102; Bousset, *Antichrist Legend*, 156–157; McGinn, *Anti-Christ*, 68–114. For descriptions of the Antichrist in visions of Daniel, see DiTommaso, *Daniel*, 93, n. 24 and the references listed there, as well the discussion of the Syriac sources, above ch. 4.1.1. On the possibility that Jesus was already viewed as an Antichrist figure in the first centuries CE in the Apocalypse of Abraham, a work that was preserved only in Old Church Slavonic, see Israel Knohl, “The Angel Yehoel and the Two Messiahs of the Apocalypse of Abraham,” in *In mari via tua: Philological Studies in Honour of Antonio Piñero*, eds. Israel Muñoz Gallarte and Jesús Peláez (Cordoba: Ediciones El Almendro, 2016), 44–47.

203 Armand Abel, “al-Dajjāl,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*; McGinn, *Anti-Christ*, 111–113. Regarding the tradition that views the eighth-century false messiah Abū ʿIsā al-Isfahānī as the Dajjāl, see Gil, *Kingdom of Ishmael*, 1:239 and n. 148; Ofer Livne-Kafri, “Islamic Traditions on Jerusalem between Judaism and Christianity,” *Cathedra* 83 (1997): 45–54; Ofer Livne-Kafri, “Jerusalem in Muslim Traditions of the ‘End of Days,’” *Cathedra* 86 (1998): 23–56 (on the Dajjāl, 46–49; on al-Sufyānī, 52–55).

second coming, just before the end of days. According to both Christian and Muslim traditions, the return of Jesus is destined to save the world, and the Muslim tradition even details the greatness of his deeds and states that he will accept Islam. In both traditions, his deeds are all-embracing and change the world, preparing it for redemption. The Vision also ascribes to him deeds whose effects can be discerned throughout the world. Still, in stark contrast to the Christian and Muslim traditions, it views him as an extremely dangerous demon embodying every expression of evil.

In the realm of struggles between mythic figures, the messiah battles two foes. Like the Christian visions of Daniel and the Muslim apocalypse, the enemies in the Vision combine features of Jesus and al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl. Its anti-messiah figures represent the emergence of the messiah and the enemies of the messiah with their roles reversed. This reversal of roles demonstrates the indirect Jewish internalization and inversion of Christian and Muslim messianic traditions, alongside ancient Jewish messianic traditions.²⁰⁴

The discussion of the different traditions revealed connections between them, as they drew on shared sources and used the same materials.

²⁰⁴ On the integration of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish traditions in the description of the enemy of the redeemer, see Rubin, *Between Jerusalem and Mecca*, 67, 102–104 (in Islam); McGinn, *Anti-Christ*, 83–113 (in Christianity).

5 Inventory of Apocalyptic Building Blocks in the Vision: Redemption in the Vision of Daniel and Other Visions

The presence of hope for redemption and the end of days is discernible²⁰⁵, in varying levels of tension and agitation, in both exegesis and matter-of-fact statements in most conventional literary genres.²⁰⁶

Visions of redemption are unique in that they present a concrete, detailed picture of how redemption will play out, relying on the significant authority of the visionary and premised on a solid, “factual” basis, namely, the fulfillment of prophecies specified in the vision. The apocalyptic discourse that followed the withdrawal of the Fourth Empire—Rome—was copied into an examination of the history of the Arabic Caliphate. That is, a schema that had already been fixed into consciousness had to undergo a paradigm shift after the intensity of the Arab conquests, and this shift was complete long before the composition of the Vision.²⁰⁷

We have already mentioned the reasons why Daniel was a particularly convenient attribution for pseudepigraphic writers of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim apocalyptic literature. Consequently, the class of “visions of Daniel” includes many dozens of works, written in various languages from late antiquity until the late medieval era.²⁰⁸ In positioning the Vision within the larger context of post-rabbinic apocalyptic works and the re-emergence of robust apocalyptic speculation during the seventh through ninth centuries, one encounters similarities in motifs and events that have been mentioned already above, all in the context of major events that took place in the Middle East while empires clashed with one another. The time and spiritual climate were ripe to accept such writings and update them to fit with their agonies and hopes. Focusing on several motifs from the “scenery” of the redemption indicates certain commonalities:

205 Parts of this section draw on and extend my earlier formulation; see Ben-Sasson, “The Vision of Daniel,” 349–355.

206 For the variegated expressions of these hopes in Jewish literature, see Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Spirituality* (New York: Schocken, 1995); R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, “Messianism: Jewish Messianism,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/messianism-jewish-messianism>, accessed May 2, 2025; Gerald J. Blidstein, “Messiah in Rabbinic Thought,” in “Messiah,” *Encyclopedia Judaica*, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/messiah>, accessed June 2, 2024; Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), chap. 17.

207 For further detail, see above, 4–5, and n. 7.

208 Above, 5–6, 48–52, 55–56, 64–67.

5.1 The Burning of the Wicked

Towards its end, the Vision describes the ultimate punishment of the enemies of the redeemer:

And the son of Jesse will burn all the wicked ones with the breath of his lips, and he will cast their carcass to the earth, where the fowl of the sky will eat them, as will the beast of the earth. And for seven years the Israelites will not need wood for kindling in their ovens, for they will burn stakes of broom shrubs from the peoples. (3b, 3:5)

This tradition is based on Isa 30:27–28 and 66:24 and on Ezek 39:9 (the third prophecy about Gog and Magog), which is discussed in the Book of Elijah:

And then the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise up Gog and Magog and all of its branches, and then all of the peoples of the earth will gather and surround Jerusalem, to wage war against it. And the messiah will arrive, and with the help of the Holy One, blessed be He, will wage war against them.

... And the Holy One, blessed be He, will gather all the birds of the heaven and the beasts of the land to eat of their flesh and drink of their blood for twelve months. And Israel will use their weapons for kindling for seven years, as it is said (Ezek 39:9), “Then the inhabitants of the cities of Israel will go out and make fires and feed them with the weapons—shields and bucklers; they shall use them as fuel for seven years.”²⁰⁹

The Vision specifies that the kindling will be stakes made of broom-wood due to a tradition about how long they burn; this item traces back to another Jewish tradition, from the sixth century:

And not just any coals, but the coals of broom-wood (Ps 120:4); all other coals, if they are extinguished outside, are also extinguished inside. However, coals of broom-wood, even if they are extinguished outside, they still burn on the inside. It happened with one broom shrub that they lit a fire with it, and it remained lit for eighteen months: a winter, a summer, and a winter. (*Gen. Rab.* 98:19)

The same punishment is described in other visions as well, close to their end. In Young Daniel:

Again, these signs will be seen on earth, and fear on the islands (cf. Ezek 39:6); and fire will be burning on them day and night. At that time the sun will be wrapped as if in sackcloth, and the moon clothed in blood (cf. Joel 2:31 and Rev 6:12), the earth will shake and the sea, and many

²⁰⁹ The Book of Elijah, in Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 46 (alternate versions at 376–377). On the Book of Elijah, see Reeves, *Trajectories*, 29–31; Himmelfarb, “Revelation and Rabbinization”, 217–235; Newman, “Methodological Critique,” lxxiv–lxxxii.

people will fall in fright ... and fire shall fall from the heaven upon the earth. And it will burn in the direction of the north, and it will be burning day and night, and will devour dust and trees and their roots. In those days the earth will be in uproar, people will rise against people, towns against towns.²¹⁰

The same description of the fire, almost verbatim, can be found in SyrD:

Signs will appear on earth: a commotion on the islands (cf. Ezek 39:6), and fire will be burning on them day and night ... And fire from the sun will devour the stones of the earth and inflame in the northern regions; it will be burning day and night, while devouring dust and roots and stones and trees. In those days the earth will be in uproar and the sea. People will rise against people, kingdom against kingdom and cities against cities.²¹¹

The Judeo-Persian QD is more merciful and careful toward the incinerated sinners:

And those who, from the religion of Israel, have deviated shall be ashamed and shameful, so that all who see them shall know and point the finger at them, as the verse says: "They shall go out and gaze on the corpses of the men who rebelled against Me: Their worms shall not die, nor their fire be quenched; they shall be a horror to all flesh (Isa 66:24)" [...] And also the wicked of Israel shall obtain the punishment of Gehenna, and [only] after that they will be saved from punishment; and even they will receive a share with their brothers, because they are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, peace be upon them, and they will not be destroyed [...] Negrasgal, who is the ruler of Gehenna, will stand before God and say: "[...] And this one nation, which is Israel, why did You give me no power over them?"²¹²

The similarity of these four visions concerning the burning of the wicked can be added to the similarities already mentioned: the first-person speaker; the order of reporting on the looting, hiding, and rediscovery of the Temple vessels; the eyes of Gog and Magog and the Son of the Daughter of Levi, and other details that will be addressed immediately.

210 Brock, "Small/Young Daniel", 273 (VII:1–5, 13–17); see also his detailed comparison between Young Daniel and SyrD: Sebastian P. Brock, "Two Editions of a New Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, 48–49 (2005–06): 7–18, where translations of few sections of the two visions are juxtaposed.

211 Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 79–80.

212 Shapira, below, 222; "Qišša," §§53, 56; 351–352 [source], 364–365 [Hebrew translation].

5.2 The Mount of Olives and Heavenly Jerusalem

Just before the completion of the vision of redemption, there is a description of the splitting of the Mount of Olives and God's appearance thereon, together with the three redeemers: Messiah ben David (scion of Jesse); Zerubbabel; and Elijah.

And the Holy One, blessed be He, will watch over them from the heavens and have mercy on them; He will stand on the Mount of Olives and the mountain will split in dread of Him. And the scion of Jesse will be on His right and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, to His left, and Elijah the Prophet with them (3b, 3:4)

The direct source of this description is the prophecy of Zechariah concerning God's manifestation and the splitting of the mount:

Look, a day of the Lord is coming ... Then the Lord will go forth and wage war against those nations as at the time He fought on the day of battle. On that day, He will set His feet on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall split across from east to west, and one part of the Mount shall shift to the north and the other to the south, a huge gorge ... And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord with one name. (Zech 14:1, 3–4, 9)

But these verses say nothing of those who will join God on the day of the Lord. There is a possible allusion to a detailed description of God's encampment on the Mount of Olives, with saviors (the son of Jesse and Melchizedek) in Ps 110:1, 5–7:

Of David. A psalm. The Lord said to my lord, "Remain by My right hand while I make your enemies your footstool" ... The Lord is at your right hand. He crushes kings in the day of His anger. He works judgment upon the nations, heaping up bodies, crushing heads far and wide. He drinks from the stream on his way; therefore he holds his head high.

Indeed, this is how the verses are interpreted in *Midrash Tehillim* (110):

And who fought all those battles? It was God who said to him, "Remain by My right hand," and I will fight for you." Although it is not written, here David explained it when he said, "The Lord said to my lord, 'Remain by My right hand.'" And likewise it says of the messiah (Isa 16:5), "And a throne shall be established in mercy, and he shall sit upon it in truth." God said, "He will sit, and I will make war for him." Thus, "he shall sit upon it in truth." What are we to do? Study and review the Torah, which is called "truth"—"Buy truth and do not sell it" (Prov 23:23).

Similarly, the verses describing the day of the Lord in Zechariah and Psalms are brought together in two apocalyptic visions, in depictions of the events occurring during the punishment of Israel's enemies, and especially in *Midrash Otot Ha-mashi'ah* ('Signs of the Messiah'):

Then the Holy One, blessed be He, will deem it unnecessary for him (i.e., the Messiah) to engage in battle. Instead, He will say to him: “Remain by My right hand!” (Ps 110:1), and He will inform Israel: “Stand still and behold the Lord’s deliverance which He effects for you today!” (Exod 14:13). Then the Holy One, blessed be He, will wage war with them, as scripture says: “and the Lord will go forth and wage war against those nations as at the time He fought on the day of battle” (Zech 14:3).²¹³

Likewise, albeit in a somewhat abridged form, at the end of the Prayer of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai:

The Holy One, blessed be He, will fight on behalf of Israel. He will say to the Messiah, “Remain by My right hand” (Ps 110:1), and the Messiah will say to Israel, “Assemble yourselves and ‘stand still and behold the Lord’s deliverance!’ (Exod 14:13).” Immediately the Holy One, blessed be He, will go forth and do battle with them, as scripture promises: “The Lord will go forth and wage war against those nations” (Zech 14:3), and it is recorded in Scripture: “At that time I will bring you, and at that time I will gather you; for I will make you famous and an object of praise for all the peoples of the earth” (Zeph 3:20). Amen! May that time and that occasion be soon!²¹⁴

These sources do not mention the Mount of Olives, nor do they name those who join God. In the apocalyptic literature, the Book of Zerubbabel contains a similar sequence (the mention of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah just before God’s manifestation on the Mount of Olives) to that of the Vision, though in the Book of Zerubbabel, they are not situated alongside God:

The holy God will stand on the Mount of Olives. His awe and his glory will rest upon the heavens and the highest heavens, over the whole earth and its depths, upon all walls, buildings, and foundations. Not a breath will be drawn, for the Lord God will reveal Himself before all on the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives will split beneath him (see Zech 14:4). The exiles of Jerusalem will ascend to the Mount of Olives. Zion and Jerusalem will see and say, “Who begot these for us? And where were these?” (see Isa 49:21). Then Nehemiah and Zerubbabel will answer Jerusalem, “Here are your children whom you bore and who were exiled from you. Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion!” (Zech 9:9).²¹⁵

With regard to the Mount of Olives as well, the apocalypse whose depiction is most similar to the Vision is QD. The manifestation of the *Shekhinah* (Divine Presence) and the placement of the saviors alongside it appears in QD with the same ensemble and names that appear in the Vision, and at a similar point in the sequence of events:

²¹³ Reeves, *Trajectories*, 127–128; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 322.

²¹⁴ Reeves, *Trajectories*, 105; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 286.

²¹⁵ Himmelfarb, *Zerubbabel*, 155–156.

And Messiah ben David, and Elijah and Zerubbabel, peace be upon them, they will go to the top of the Mount of Olives ... And when he blows the third shofar, the *Shekhinah* will be revealed ... And Abraham our father, peace be upon him, will stand on the right, and Moses, our teacher, peace be upon him, and Messiah ben David, peace be upon him, will be on the left, and the Israelites will stand there. (below, 221; 50a, ll. 50, 52)

The full redemption detailed in the Vision then describes the miraculous rebuilding of Jerusalem and the resumption of the Temple service:

God will lower Jerusalem, already built, from heaven, with chains of iron, and He will set it upon four [mountains]: Tabor, Carmel, Hermon, and the Mount of Olives: And the heavens and the earth will be renewed, and they will build Jerusalem with precious stones and gems. (3b, 15–19, 3:7)

A very similar description of the miraculous rebuilding of Jerusalem appears in QD:

And God, blessed be His name, will be revealed from heaven. And He will shout with a loud voice a mighty roar from Zion and from the Temple. And God will be pleased with all the congregation of Israel, and He will bring down from heaven the Jerusalem [that lies behind] the veil [=pargod]. And the offspring and root of Jesse will be revealed, that is, the Messiah son of David, peace be upon him, as the [Biblical] verse states: “and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked” (Isa 11:4). That is, with the wind of his lips the oppressor will die. And Messiah son of Joseph will be killed, and the sign of Messiah son of David, peace be upon him, will appear; and he will kill the entire army of Gog and Magog; and Elijah, of blessed memory, will come with good tidings for Israel. He will raise up the living and the dead, and he will rebuild the Temple. Egypt will be destroyed, yet the Temple will remain [firm in its place]. And Messiah son of David, Elijah, and Zerubbabel, peace be upon them—to the top of the Mount of Olives they will go. Elijah will command the Messiah to blow the shofar. And [some?] of the light from *the six days of creation* will become visible, and the light of the moon will be like [the light of] the sun; and God will send a complete recovery to all the oppressed of Israel. (QD below, 218; §49)

The author incorporates elements from several biblical passages, from Isaiah, Zechariah, and Ezekiel, which describe the greatness of the future Jerusalem. “Heavenly Jerusalem” became a dominant motif in the scenery of the redemption and is mentioned in 1 Baruch chapter 4, 1 Enoch, the Wisdom of Solomon, and other apocalyptic works.²¹⁶ The tradition about the descent of the Temple from heaven

²¹⁶ For the biblical verses, see Isa 54:11–14, Zech 2:4–8, and Ezek 40–48. The idea was developed in different forms later. See 1 Baruch 4:30–37; 1 Enoch 90:28–39; Wisdom of Solomon 10:18–21; Jubilees 1:17, 26–29; 25:21; 4 Ezra 7:26, 10:25–28, 40–58; 2 Baruch 4:1–6; 6:7–9; 32:2–4.

and the links between this tradition and Christian traditions have been discussed in their historical context. The tradition intensified after the Muslim conquest, in response to the development of Muslim traditions about Muḥammad's ascent to the heavens from the site of the Temple.²¹⁷

While the text of Young Daniel is cut off before the last stage of the vision, the same description is found in SyrD:

Then the New Jerusalem will be built, and Zion will be completely inhabited. The mighty Lord will build Zion, and his holy Christ will shine in Jerusalem. Mighty men will build her walls, and holy angels will complete her towers.²¹⁸

In commenting on this passage, Henze states that, “in the Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel ... no connection is made between the earthly and the New Jerusalem. The Heavenly Jerusalem is not like a model of the Jerusalem of David and Solomon but is the locus of intense angelic activity.”²¹⁹ As with other motifs, we find a similar description in the Vision of Daniel, following other examples of Jewish and Christian apocalypses. We will refer to two more below.

Unlike most Jewish apocalyptic visions,²²⁰ the Vision's detailed portrait of the redemption **lacks explicit mention of the rebuilding of the Temple**. The descent of the Temple from the heavens is described explicitly in the vision of Zerubbabel as well as traditions that predate and postdate it. In general, Jewish eschatological depictions include the rebuilding of the Temple, whereas in Christian sources, the descent of Jerusalem without a Temple is a major motif.²²¹

²¹⁷ Regarding “Heavenly Jerusalem” in other apocalypses, compare with Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 11–22; on the links between this tradition and Christian traditions, see Dan, *Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 3, 1016–1017 and the references in the footnotes there; on response to Muslim traditions, see Rubin, *Between Jerusalem and Mecca*, 29–44.

²¹⁸ Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 107.

²¹⁹ Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 107 n. 218.

²²⁰ Sources that mention the Temple descending from the heavens: *Pirkei Mashi'ah*, the Book of Zerubbabel, *Midrash Vayosha*, R. Saadia Gaon's *Beliefs and Opinions*, and R. Hai Gaon's Responsum on Redemption. There is no mention of the Temple in the Book of Elijah (see Reeves, *Trajectories*, 38–39 and n. 59) or in Qilir's liturgical poem “Ba-yamim ha-Hem u-va'Et ha-Hi” (“In Those Days and at That Time”). There is mention of neither Jerusalem nor the Temple descending from the heavens in *Midrash Lekah Tov* or in *Aggadat Ha-Mashi' ah* (published in Reeves, *Trajectories*, 146–147).

²²¹ Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 1–22, 32–33, 84–85; Dan, *Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 3, 1015–1016; Avigdor Aptowitzer, “The Heavenly Temple in the Agada,” *Tarbiz* 2.2–3 (1931): 137–153, 250, 257–287, 382 [Hebrew]; Ephraim E. Urbach, “The Lower Jerusalem and the Supernal Jerusalem,” in *Jerusalem Through the Ages*, ed. Yosef Aviram (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 1968), 156–171 [Hebrew].

Various explanations can be offered for the puzzling absence of the rebuilding of the Temple in the Vision, none of which is satisfactory:

1. For the author, influenced by the Arabic name for Jerusalem, Bayt al-Maqdis, Jerusalem and the Temple (Mikdash) were synonymous. However, the interchangeability of Jerusalem and the Temple developed in the other direction; the city became identified with the Temple, and not vice versa. Thus, the absence of any mention of the Temple, the Sanctuary, or the Inner Sanctum from this description of the final redemption is a glaring deficiency.²²²
2. When the author describes how God will lower Jerusalem from the heavens—"And God will lower Jerusalem, already built, from heaven, with chains of iron ... and they will build Jerusalem with precious stones and they will bring Israel up [to Jerusalem] with acclaim, rejoicing, song, and praise"—he is referring to Jerusalem and the Temple as one.
3. That the author means Jerusalem and the Temple together might be corroborated later on, in the description of the banquet of the messiah: "High priests and Levites will sing, Aaron the high priest and the priests will offer sacrifices and slaughter them for all time[?]."

However we explain it, the absence of the Temple is another feature that singles out the Vision and leads us to ask: Does the absence of this detail, which appears in both Jewish and Muslim apocalyptic visions, including QD, attest to a connection between the author of the Vision and the Christian visions of Daniel that he had before him, and to the (accidental?) omission of any description of the building of the Third Temple?²²³

²²² See Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 36–37. See also the discussions in Gil, *Palestine*, § 125; Shelomo D. Goitein, "On the Arabic Names of Jerusalem," in *Mincha Le-Yehudah: Rabbi Judah Leib Zlotnick Jubilee Volume*, ed. Simha Assaf et al. (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1949), 62–66.

²²³ See Grant R. Jeffrey, *The New Temple and The Second Coming* (Colorado Springs, CO: Water-Brook Press, 2007); Tom Wright, "Jerusalem in the New Testament," in *Jerusalem Past and Present in the Purposes of God*, ed. Peter W. L. Walker (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994), 53–77; Ben F. Meyer, *Christus Faber: The Master Builder and the House of God* (Princeton Theological Monograph Series 29; Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1992), 217–280. On Islamic attitudes, see Rubin, *Between Jerusalem and Mecca*; Cook, *Studies*, 51–56.

5.3 The Flight to the Wilderness

Part of the eschatological portrait of several apocalyptic works is a flight from the Antichrist into the wilderness. In the Vision, there are three such flights: 1) The flight of the Ishmaelites from the Son of the Daughter of Levi into the wilderness of Paran (where the biblical Ishmael grew up); 2) the flight of Israel, together with Messiah ben Joseph, from Armilus; 3) the flight of Israel into the wilderness of Judah after the killing of Messiah ben Joseph.

The last flight, into the wilderness of Judah, is unique in that it is characterized as a different, flexible period with a different temporal rhythm. The way that this wilderness period is described is unique to the Vision and QD:

Vision of Daniel	QD
Then the people of Israel will flee to the wilderness, put ashes on their heads, rend their garments, and weep in the wilderness of Judah for 40 days and 40 nights, weeping upon weeping, wailing upon wailing, the weeping of the righteous and the weeping of the wicked.	And the Israelites will flee—men, women, and children—and they will gather in the wilderness and mourn [for those killed] and sit in the dust and cry out a great cry to the Lord for 40 days.
And the Living God will bring down food for them from the heavens, and a spring of water will go forth from beneath the Sanctuary, and they will drink.	Then God will restore His providence over the Israelites and open springs of water from the heavens.
And for them a month will be like a week, a week like a day, and a day like an hour.	One month will be like a week, and one week will be like one day, and one day like an hour.

The flight to the wilderness represents an escape to a neutral and protected area of activity, shielded from pressure and persecution, akin to the wilderness to which the Israelites fled from the oppression of Egypt, where they remained before their campaigns to enter and settle the land of Israel. In the wilderness, they received the Torah, became a nation, and resided there for **forty** years. In the Vision, the flight to the wilderness commences a **forty**-day stay there. A similar escape motif recurs in other apocalyptic writings. This is a flight from the series of pressing historical events that are essential to the divine plan, to a liminal region between pressure and redemption. Fleeing to the wilderness entails refinement, purification, prayer, and revelation, either by God or His angel, followed by a return to settled lands, where the battles take place, followed by the arrival of complete redemption in that very land.

The starting point for the significance of the wilderness in apocalyptic descriptions is chapter 20 of Ezekiel. This chapter includes a description of the Israelites' sojourn in the wilderness of Sinai after leaving Egypt, their sins, their judgment

in the wilderness at the end of days, the removal and punishment of rebels and transgressors from among the Israelites, and the ultimate redemption of the faithful among them from the wilderness:

With a strong hand and an outstretched arm and overflowing fury, I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, and I will bring you into the **wilderness of the peoples**; and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers **in the wilderness of the land of Egypt**, so will I enter into judgment with you—declares the Lord God. I will make you pass under the shepherd's staff, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. I will remove from you those who rebel and transgress against Me; I will take them out of the countries where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. (Ezek 20:34–38)

In the Vision, the wilderness appears as the destination of Israel's flight from its enemies and where the faithful of Israel are selected from among those who were tempted to join the camp of the messiah's adversaries. The wilderness as the scene of a pause during the process of redemption at the end of days, and as the place for separating the worthy of redemption from the sinners, is described in Ruth Rabbah, which underwent its final editing in the eighth century. The description of the wilderness scene and the duration of the stay there, 45 days, is mentioned by way of the story of Ruth the Moabite, the esteemed ancestress of the messiah, as she sat to the side and dipped her bread in vinegar.

"She sat beside [*mitzad*] the reapers"—his kingship was temporarily captured [*litzod*] from him, as it says: "I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for the war and the city will be captured" (Zech 14:2). "He handed her roasted grain"—it is destined to return to him, as it is stated: "He will smite the land with the rod of his mouth" (Isaiah 11:4). Rabbi Berekhya [said] in the name of Rabbi Levi: Like the initial redeemer, so the ultimate redeemer. Just as the initial redeemer was revealed, and then was again concealed from them—and how long was he concealed from them? For three months, as it is stated: "They encountered Moses and Aaron" (Exod 5:20)—so too, the ultimate redeemer will be revealed to them and concealed from them. How long will he be concealed from them? Rabbi Tanhuma [said] in the name of the Rabbis: 45 days; that is what is written: "From the time the daily offering is abolished [1290 days]" (Daniel 12:11), and it is written: "Happy is one who waits and it comes [to 1,335 days]" (Daniel 12:12). These extra days, what are they? Rabbi Yitzhak ben Ketzarta [said] in the name of Rabbi Yona: These are the 45 days that Israel will gather and eat saltwort; that is what is written: "Who pick saltwort from the bushes" (Job 30:4). (Ruth Rabbah 5:6)

Other midrashic traditions describe the flight to the wilderness and staying there for 45 days. Thus, in *Aggadat Ha-Mashi'ah*:

“... and this will be the plague” (Zech 14:5–12). And Israel will go into exile into the <‘desert of the peoples’>²²⁴ to forage among the salt-plants and broom-sage roots for forty-five days.

A fourth heavenly voice will come forth and say, “(the) voice of one crying out: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord in the desert!’” (Isa 40:3), and a fifth heavenly voice will say, “no lion will be there” (Isa 35:9).

A sixth heavenly voice will say: “I will place in the desert cedar, acacia, and myrtle” (Isa 41:19), and a seventh heavenly voice will proclaim: “Console, console My people!” (Isa 40:1). Elijah will announce glad tidings to Israel: “your God has become sovereign!” (Isa 52:7). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 146–148; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 104–105)

Similarly, in the “Ten Signs” (“*Eser Otot*”) midrash (seventh and eighth signs) revealed to Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, we have the following detailed description (as well as less-detailed descriptions in other *midrashim* constructed after the same pattern):

All of Israel will immediately flee into the deserts, whereas everyone who is entertaining doubts about their religion will turn to the nations of the world and state: “This is the redemption for which we have been waiting, for the Messiah is dead!” All those who are no longer anticipating the redemption will be embarrassed by it (i.e., the Messiah’s demise) and they will turn to the gentile nations.

The entire remnant of Israel—the sanctified and purified ones—will remain in the desert of Judah for 45 days. They will forage and feed on salt plant and pluck leaves of shrubbery (cf. Job 30:4), and by them will be fulfilled what is said in Hosea: “Therefore, behold, I will entice her and lead her out to the desert, and I will console her” (Hos 2:16).

... At the first blast, the Messiah of the lineage of David and Elijah the prophet will be revealed to those proven righteous ones of Israel, the ones who had fled into the desert of Judah, at the end of the 45 days. They will restore their hearts, invigorate their weakened hands, and strengthen their tottering knees. All Israel—those who remain throughout the whole world—will hear the sound of the shofar and realize that God has remembered them and that complete redemption has arrived. They will gather together and come (to Jerusalem), as scripture says: “those who are lost in Assyria will come [along with those cast out in Egypt, and they will worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem]” (Isa 27:13). Fear and trembling will fall upon the nations of the world on account of that sound, and terrible diseases will afflict them. Israel will gird themselves for departure, and the Messiah of the lineage of David will come, together with Elijah the prophet and those righteous ones who returned from the desert of Judah and with all those who have assembled from Israel. He will enter Jerusalem, climb the steps of the Temple ruins, and take his seat there. The Holy One, blessed be He, will open for them springs connected with the Tree of Life in order to supply them with water on the way, as it says in Isaiah: “I will open rivers on the high places and fountains in the midst of the plains; I will turn the wilderness into a pool of water and the dry land into springs

²²⁴ Reeves, *Trajectories*, 146–147, emends the text based on the Prayer of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, which draws the phrase from Ezek 20:35.

of water” (Isa 41:18), and it is written: “they will not be hungry or thirsty; heat and sun will not afflict them, [for the One showing them mercy will lead them and He will guide them by springs of water]” (Isa 49:10). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 104–105, 126–127; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula* 321–323).

Another recension of the “Ten Signs” text expands the final two ‘signs’, referring to the flight to the desert, as follows:

Marmorstein	Higger
At that time Israel will experience great distress: some will hide themselves in pits, and some of them will flee into the wilderness, where they will remain for forty days. Others will follow after them, and they will (all) cry out due to their distress	Israel will experience great distress. They will hide themselves in caves and pits, and the rest of them will flee into the wilderness of ‘Ammon and Moab, as scripture states: ‘Let my dispersed ones sojourn among you, O Moab’ (Isa 16:4). They will wander about there for forty days, nourishing themselves with broom and salt-plant, for scripture says: ‘they pluck salt-plant (and) leaves of shrubbery and the root(s) of broom for their food’ (Job 30:4). Armilos, son of Satan, will come to the wilderness of Moab; this is the Armilos spawned from a stone of whom scripture speaks: “and he produced the wicked one with the stone” (Zech 4:7).

(Reeves, *Trajectories*, 114–115; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 313)²²⁵

Likewise, we find in the work *Pirkei Mashi’ah*:

And in the third year of the plague, they will openly apostatize against Him. But at the end of the year the ruler will be slain, and they will flee into the deserts. The land will cry out from its place, and the disciples of the Sages will perish ...
Those of them who escape will flee to the wilderness of Moab and to the territory of the Ammonites, and there those refugees of Israel will wait, and there God will perform miracles for them: He will make a spring gush forth for them from the subterranean depths, for scripture says: “My scattered ones will sojourn with you, O Moab” (Isa 16:4). There they will eat broom-sage roots for 45 days. (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 153, 157–158; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 336)

The motif of flight to the wilderness during lulls in the redemption process, eating saltwort, God’s revelation to the fugitives, and the election of the loyal appears in most Jewish, Christian, and Muslim apocalyptic visions. It is worth singling out

²²⁵ The two texts compared here are from Genizah manuscripts. They were published in Arthur Marmorstein, “Les signes du Messie,” *Revue des Études Juives* 52 (1906): 176–186; Michael Higger, *Halakhot va-aggadot* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary, 1933), 115–123. See also Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 311–314 and his textual notes on 422–424.

Pirkei Eliyahu (“Chapters of Elijah”) in which, as in the Vision and QD, the Israelites flee to the wilderness three times.²²⁶

Once apocalyptic literature crystallized, the ‘flight to the wilderness’ motif was fixed in place, just before the end of the vision. Thus, in the Book of Elijah:

On the twenty-fifth (day) of the eighth month [*sic*; i.e., Marheshvan], the third group of exiles will depart. They will weep and cry out on behalf of their brethren who were slain, and they will cry out in the desert for 25 days²²⁷ and not taste any (food), living instead “on what issues from the mouth of the Lord” (Deut 8:3). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 34; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 43)

The Book of Zerubbabel mentions the move to the wilderness briefly, and as a result of exile by the kings of ten nations who rose up against Israel:

He will come against the holy people of the Most High, and with him there will be ten kings wielding great power and force, and he will do battle with the holy ones. He will prevail over them and will kill the Messiah of the lineage of Joseph, Nehemiah b. Hushiel, and will also kill sixteen righteous ones alongside him. Then they will banish Israel to the desert in three groups.²²⁸ (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 59; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 80)

The various shades and emphases in mentions of the flight to the wilderness crystallize in form and eventually become canonical in the early tenth century, in the eighth discourse of *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, by Rabbi Saadia Gaon (882–942). Saadia endeavored to anchor the messianic conceptions he gathered from the texts before him in biblical verses, as he did in his other writings. Some attribute this to the Karaite-Rabbanite controversy of his time.²²⁹ Even in Saadia’s work, the flight to the wilderness is mentioned three times, as is the election of those who remained faithful to the religion of Israel from among the sinners, without any mention of sinners following a false messiah, as found in several apocalypses. The first flight is linked to the yoke of the kingdoms at the end of days:

²²⁶ Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 52.

²²⁷ Even-Shmuel has “and they will fast in the desert for 45 days,” a detail which makes excellent sense but which does not figure in any critical edition of this text.

²²⁸ This is a reference to the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem by Heraclius upon its recapture from the Persians in 629; see Carl de Boor (ed.), *Theophanis Chronographia*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1883–85), 328; Harry Turtledove, *The Chronicle of Theophanes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 30; David M. Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 173; after Reeves, *Trajectories*, 59, n. 138.

²²⁹ Dan, *History of Jewish Mysticism and Esotericism*, vol. 4, 100–120.

Now there will come upon the Jewish nation at that time great misfortunes, the most difficult to endure being the deterioration of their relationship with the governments of the world, who will drive them into the **wilderness** to let them starve and be miserable. As a result of what has happened to them, many of them will desert their faith, only those purified remaining. To these Elijah the prophet will manifest himself and thus the redemption will come. (Saadia, *Beliefs and Opinions*, Treatise 8, ch. 5; Rosenblatt, 302)

The second flight, for Saadia, is linked to the arrival of Messiah ben Joseph:²³⁰

Furthermore, that only few from among the Jewish nation—not many—will gather about him (Messiah S. of Joseph) is attested by the statement of scriptures: And I will take you one of and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion (Jer 3:14).

That again enmity will spring up between them and many of the nations, with the result that the latter will drive them into the many **wildernesses** is supported by the Scriptural remark, And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face (Ezekiel 20:35). That the Jews will experience hunger and thirst and hardship, such it was the lot of their early ancestors to endure, has its basis in the subsequent declaration: Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you (Ezekiel 20:36). (Saadia, 8:5; Rosenblatt, 302–303)

Saadia continues his portrayal of the purification process that takes place during the wilderness sojourn on the basis of verses from Ezekiel 20:

That, moreover, they will be purified and sorted like silver and gold, so that their patience and [the strength of] their belief will become known, is borne out by the statement of the script: “And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant” (Ezekiel 20:37).

That, furthermore, these matters will cause those whose faith is weak to desert their religion saying, “this is what we have hoped for and this what we have attained thereof,” is implied in the statement which follows next, namely: “And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me” (Ezekiel 20:38). (Saadia, 8:5; Rosenblatt, 303)

Saadia describes the third flight in connection with the arrival of Gog and Magog:

These will be the most distinguished among them, as the Scripture says: And kings shall be thy foster fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers (Isa 49:23). (b) Some will be made to serve in the cities and villages ... (c) Some, again, **will serve in the fields and steppes**, as

²³⁰ On the source for the description of this messiah in R. Saadia's writing see Harry Sysling, “Saadia's portrayal of the Messiah Ben Joseph,” *Nordisk judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies* 13:2 (1992), 73–82. Sysling demonstrates that the description of the appearance of Armilus and of the death of Messiah ben Joseph was influenced not by the Book of Zerubbabel, but by *Otot Ha-mashi'ah*. On this messiah, see above, notes 146, 152.

is said in Scripture: And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and aliens shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers (Isa 61:5). (Saadia, 8:6; Rosenblatt, 307)

... Any Israelite, again, who will remain in the **desert** or who will have no one of the nations to bring him to Jerusalem, will be brought so speedily by our lord as though a cloud had lifted him up and carried him. (Saadia, 8:6; Rosenblatt, 309)

The next step in the canonization of the wilderness in the setting of the redemption is found in the late tenth and early-eleventh century. In the detailed responsum of R. Hayya Gaon (939–1038) dedicated to the redemption, flight to the wilderness is mentioned three times. First, after the arrival of Messiah ben Joseph:

When all the nations hear that a king for Israel has arisen in Jerusalem, they will rise up against them in the rest of the provinces and drive them out. They will say to them: ‘Up to now you dwelt loyally with us, since you had no ruler or prince of your own. But now that you have a ruler, you can no longer dwell in our land!’ Many Israelites will go out into the **wilderness** regions adjacent to homelands—regarding this time Scripture says: “I shall make you enter the **wilderness** of the peoples” (Ezek 20:35)—and they will dwell there in tents, as Scripture says about this time: “I shall make you live in tents again” (Hos 12:10). Many of them will lack food and water, and they will experience suffering based on their (previous) deeds. Scripture states about this time: “I will make you pass beneath the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant” (Ezek 20:37). Many will abandon the covenant with Israel, for they will be weary of their lives (as Jews), and about them Scripture has stated: “I will purge from among you those who rebel and those who offend Me” (Ezek 20:38). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 135–136; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 135–136)

Second, after Armilus arrives, kills Messiah ben Joseph, and pretends to be a messiah:

Consequently, those who remain in Jerusalem will be refined and purified, and also those who went out to the **wilderness** areas will be tested and refined; about two parts will be left over from these and about a third will be left of those. About them Scripture testifies: “and it will come to pass in all the land—utterance of the Lord—that two portions in it will be cut off (and) will expire, and only a third will be left in it. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and I will refine them like one refines silver, and I will test them like one tests gold” (Zech 13:8–9). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 136; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 136)

Third, accompanying Elijah’s interim redemption after the arrival of Gog:

At that time Elijah will appear in the **desert among those who are located in the wilderness regions**, and he will restore their hearts, as Scripture says: “he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Mal 3:24). The Messiah of the lineage of David will suddenly appear to those who are in the Land, for the Messiah of the lineage of Joseph had previously assembled the people before him, as Scripture states: “behold, I am sending My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. Suddenly the

Lord Whom you seek will enter His Temple” (Mal 3:1). The Israelites who are in the **wilderness regions** will follow Elijah until they meet the Israelites who are with the Messiah of the lineage of David in Judaea. Scripture says about them: “in those days the house of Judah will come with the house of Israel, and they will come together from a northern land unto the land which I bequeathed your ancestors” (Jer 3:18). Most of those who were slain will lie dead in the Land for forty days, for when the Messiah of the lineage of Joseph is killed, his corpse will be cast aside for forty days. Nevertheless, no impure thing will afflict it until the Messiah of the lineage of David comes and resurrects him at the command of the Lord. This will be the first of the signs which he will perform; namely, the resurrection of the dead, for he will regain life. Then the Messiah of the lineage of David, Elijah, and the Israelites who came from the **wilderness regions** to Jerusalem will dwell securely (and) undisturbed for a long time. (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 137–138; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 137)

As for the remainder of Israel—those found in **wilderness regions** where there are no gentiles to bring them—our God will lift them up as if by winds, for Scripture states: “I will say to the north, ‘Give!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold back!’” (Isa 43:6), and they will likewise be borne upon clouds and fog, as Scripture states: “Who are these floating like a cloud?” (Isa 60:8). At the approach of these exiles, the sea of Egypt will be divided for them at one spot, and the Euphrates river will be split at seven places. With regard to this time Scripture states: “I will open rivers on the heights and fountains in the midst of plains; I will make the **wilderness** a pool of water, and the arid land a place where water gushes forth. I will place cedar, acacia, myrtle, and oil tree in the **wilderness**, and I will set out together in the barren plain cypress, elm, and box-tree” (Isa 41:18–19)—these latter will serve as shade for them. No single Israelite will be left alive in any (foreign) place when they come to Jerusalem, for Scripture says: ‘I will not leave a single one of them there’ (Ezek 39:28). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 138–139; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 138)

Though the Israelites’ flight into the wilderness appears in most apocalyptic works, basing themselves on the Scriptural tradition of Ezekiel 20, in QD and the Vision, the Israelites flee three times, due to three traumatic events. This triple flight became canonic when R. Saadia Gaon described them in detail in his theological treatise, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*.

5.4 Leviathan and the Behemoth

The final section of the Vision describes the banquet of Messiah ben David, which will transpire after all the wars of Messiah ben Joseph. Messiah ben David is the host of the banquet who slaughters all the beasts served there:

... And Messiah ben David will arise after all the wars of Messiah ben Joseph; he will appear as a king, and he will draw out the Leviathan with a hook and raise it from the sea. And the Behemoths that he pastures on a thousand mountains, Messiah will slaughter all three of them severely (?). And they will eat and rejoice a great joy, unlike any other that has been made from the day the world was created until this day. They will bow and give praise to their Creator with thanks, with songs, and with ecstasy. (3b, 24–24a, 7, 3:10)

This description aligns with midrashic traditions and messianic visions from the Second Temple period onward. Four components are mentioned in the various descriptions of this feast: Behemoth/wild ox (a land animal), Leviathan (an aquatic beast), Ziz (a flying beast), and wine (plant). In the Vision, only the two that are mentioned in chapter 40 of Job are named: Behemoth and Leviathan. Evidently, in its original version, Ziz was also mentioned, as the extant version mentions the difficult slaughter of **three** beasts. The description of their ‘difficult’ hunt by the Messiah ben David corresponds to what is written in Job about the might of these two creatures, whose capture could only be accomplished by God:

Look at Behemoth, which I made along with you. It eats grass, like cattle. ... Only its Maker can draw His sword against it. The mountains yield it produce, where all the wild beasts play. ... A raging river does not alarm it; it is secure, though the Jordan should surge against its mouth. Can anyone capture it by the eyes, or trap it and pierce its nose? Can you pull in Leviathan with a fishhook, tie down its tongue with a rope? Can you put a cord through its nose or pierce its jaw with a barb? ... Lay a hand on it, and you will remember the struggle and never do it again! (Job 40:15–24; 41:8)²³¹

In the Vision, it is Messiah ben David who slaughters the three beasts served at the banquet. In other sources, different ways of preparing them for the feast are mentioned, including the fearsome beasts fight one another in a manner that does not render them potentially non-kosher; God slaughters them; Moses slaughters them; or the celebrants themselves prepare the feast.

The mention of only two of the banquet’s components aligns with their proximity in Job, and this is characteristic of Christian traditions, which are also ancient, like the (Syriac) Apocalypse of Baruch:

When all is accomplished that was to come to pass in those parts, that the Messiah shall then begin to be revealed. And Behemoth shall be revealed from his place and Leviathan shall ascend from the sea, those two great monsters which I created on the fifth day of creation, and shall have kept until that time; and then they shall be for food for all that are left. (2 Baruch 29:3–4)

Near the end of QD, the banquet is mentioned and described as lasting for 1,300 years, but the ‘menu’ is not listed. Other traditions mention a 2,000-year period of peace and tranquility preceding the banquet of the messiah. For example, *Nistarot De-Rashbi*:

Israel will dwell in peace for two thousand years. They will feast upon Behemoth, Leviathan, and Ziz. They will slaughter Behemoth; Ziz shall rend Leviathan with its ankles; and Moses

²³¹ Job 40:25–32 in Hebrew Scripture is numbered 41:1–8 in Christian Bibles.

will come and slaughter the ‘wild Ziz’ (Ps 50:11; 80:14). At the end of two thousand years, the Holy One, blessed be He, will sit upon a throne of judgment in the valley of Jehoshaphat. (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 86; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 197)

The special feast of the righteous is described also towards the end of the eclectic anthology *Pirkei Mashi’ah*. Here, the Holy One sets the feast and serves its participants:

At that time the Holy One, blessed be He, will arrange tables, slaughter Behemoth, Leviathan, and the wild Ziz, and prepare a great banquet for the righteous. Each one of them will be seated (at the table) in accordance with their honor. The Holy One, blessed be He, will say to them: “Do you wish to drink wine made from apples, pomegranates, or grapes?” The righteous will respond: “The authority is Yours to do whatever You decide!” The Holy One, blessed be He, will bring them wine made from grapes that has been reserved since the six days of the initial creation-week, as Scripture states: “I will serve you spiced wine” (Cant 8:2). The Holy One, blessed be He, will satisfy the desire of the righteous when He places His Throne of Glory there and sits with them, as Scripture says: “I have come to My garden, My sister, bride” (Cant 5:1). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 165–166; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 341–342)²³²

5.5 Two Redeemers—Ben Joseph and Ben Jesse

The two authentic redeemers, Messiah ben Joseph and Messiah ben David, appear in the Vision during a time when crisis intensifies and when physical hardship and persecution are compounded by the pressure of encountering the victorious powers, with their leaders and nations. This encounter is particularly agonizing due to the success of these forces in military campaigns and their claims to be God-sent messiahs who have merited His aid. They perform miracles and wield power and influence over the weak-willed. Messiah ben Joseph leads the difficult battles, restores those who remained faithful to God’s word, and challenges Armilus with a test that will visibly expose the falsehood of his claim to be the true messiah. He will pay with his life for this confrontation. This messiah is referred to as the son of Ephraim in the description preceding his death at the hands of Armilus. After his resurrection, he continues to lead the military campaigns. In this third stage of the Vision, he is called Messiah ben Joseph.

²³² For additional descriptions, see Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909), 27–28, Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1925), 43–46; Adolph Jellinek, *Beit Ha-Midrash*, vol. 5 (Jerusalem: Wahrmann, 1967), 45–46.

Messiah ben David will wait until Messiah ben Joseph concludes the military battles with the obvious enemies. To fulfill the vision of the end of days as depicted in Isaiah 11:4, the “wicked” remain, and, “the son of Jesse will burn all the wicked ones with the breath of his lips, and he will cast their carcass to the earth” (3b, 7–8, 3:5). Messiah ben Joseph is not counted among the close companions of Messiah ben David. His companions are Abraham, Moses, Zerubbabel, and Elijah. Messiah ben David will then turn to the other front—the restoration of the people, the land, and Jerusalem.²³³

5.6 The Conclusion of the Vision

Immediately following the forty days and nights in the wilderness comes the conclusion of the main part of these visions, even though redemption and vengeance are not complete even after the disappearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi and the killing of Armilus by Messiah ben Joseph²³⁴. Alongside the extermination of the remaining evildoers, this final redemptive process also lays the (positive) foundation for renewal and rebuilding, including the resurrection of the dead, the ingathering of the dispersed of Israel, the construction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the restoration of the prescribed service of God in the Temple. These tasks are assigned, in part, to Messiah ben David. The final sequence of the ultimate salvation is initiated by God, independent of Israel’s cries or conduct.

The conclusion of the Vision seeks to imbue its author, Daniel, with the authority of the vanguard of the new world. It returns to the conclusion in the twelfth chapter of the biblical Book of Daniel and uses its methods and terminology to conceal the time of redemption.²³⁵ Yet Daniel’s encounter with Jeremiah, Elijah, and Zerubbabel, and his report to Ezra about the salvation of Israel, Messiah ben David, and the secrets of the Vision, offer some slight indication about the contents of the lost beginning of the text. Jeremiah, Ezra, and Zerubbabel are mentioned several times at the beginning of QD. This Judeo-Persian vision opens by invoking Jeremiah: “I am Daniel, of the sons of King Jeconiah of Judah, who was in Jerusalem, in the Temple. There was a man with us named Jeremiah ben Hilkiyah who was always obedient to the Lord.” Jeremiah is the authority figure who initiates Daniel on his path, just before the destruction of the Temple, just as Ezra and Zerubbabel

²³³ On Messiah ben Joseph, see above, 68, n. 112; Sysling, “Saadya’s Portrayal.”

²³⁴ Parts of this section draw on and extend my earlier formulation; see Ben-Sasson, “The Vision of Daniel,” 354–355.

²³⁵ On the elements of obscuring the apocalypse, see Funkenstein, “Schedule,” 46–47.

appear a bit later, after the Jews were permitted to return and rebuild the Temple. Concluding the Vision with Jeremiah, Zerubbabel, and a report to Ezra returns the reader to figures familiar from the beginning of the Vision. Thus, it stands to reason that the Vision's opening was similar to that of QD.

The Vision ends with its contents being sealed up until the appropriate time for its disclosure, but not before it was shared with three others: Jeremiah, Zerubbabel, and Ezra:

And I, Daniel, upon hearing these words, rejoiced greatly; I honored, extolled, and praised the Supreme King of kings, and I said to the angel: When will these visions [be fulfilled]? He told me: Lie with your forefathers and arise to accept your fate at the end of days. Thereupon Jeremiah and Elijah and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, came to me and said: Write down this vision. I revealed it to Ezra the Scribe, and it uplifted me; and I revealed the redemption of Israel, and about the scion, the son of Jesse, so that [Ezra] reveals these secrets to the sages, for it will remain hidden until the time of Israel's salvation. Written and sealed. (4a, 7–15, 4:1–5)

According to the proposed reconstruction, these four figures—Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezra, and Zerubbabel—who are linked to the redemption, are also mentioned at the beginning of the Vision:

I am Daniel, of the sons of Jeconiah, the king of the House of Judah. When I was in Jerusalem, in the Temple, there was with us [a man] named Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiyah. He always walked in obedience of God [...] God said to me: "O Daniel, say this to all the nations, 'Arise ye and rebuild the Temple, for now seventy years [are completed].' O Daniel, tell Cyrus that God, blessed be His name, commanded: 'Go and rebuild the Temple!' And with Cyrus take also Ezra the Scribe and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel" [...] Then Ezra, peace be upon him, went to all the countries and said, "Arise ye and return to the Temple, for we will rebuild it and renew it!" But the Israelites did not go; they believed that Ezra was speaking falsehood; they wanted to kill Ezra. And Ezra knew it and ran away. (QD, below 180, 193–194 §§1, 12–13)

The end of the vision is similar to the end of the biblical Book of Daniel: the end times are described through chronological events and allusions, yet it remains sealed up until the events transpire, whereupon the fulfillment of the Vision will be interpreted retrospectively.

6 Apocalyptic Time in the Vision of Daniel

6.1 Figures and Symbols of Time in Redemption

The temporal order that brings readers of the Vision to the end of days arrives after a series of necessary processes, few of which depend on the behavior of the Jewish masses²³⁶. All that is required of them is to wait patiently for the annihilation of the rulers and to adhere to their faith despite the challenges and difficulties they face. As increased hardship is anticipated just before the messianic era, the challenge also intensifies in the presence of the messiah's enemies—which are depicted as mythical figures arriving in their designated times, coinciding with the end of the ruling dynasties who take deliberate action against the Jews. The chapter on the messiah's enemies is described in all its stages, including the actions of Messiah ben Joseph and Messiah ben David.

Many authors of apocalypses include dates and time indicators for the events predicted in their works, including dates associated with various counts: a specific number of years or temporal units that will pass after significant events; cryptic numbers indicating the time until the eschaton; the number of rulers until the eschaton; and counts sanctified in textual traditions of holy books. None of these appear in the Vision of Daniel.

Rather, in the Vision there are three types of counts. The first, which is rich in detail, is the sequential enumeration of the caliphs. Each ruler is specified by name, deeds, title in some cases, and duration of their reign. This sequential count might have amounted to a number with symbolic biblical significance, but in the version before us, the sequential numbering is cut off in the middle, at number fourteen, between Abū D̲ja'far and al-Mahdī. The second time marker is the seven years of burning of the wicked, which is borrowed from Ezekiel 39:9. If, as proposed, there was a single source for the Vision and QD, the editor of the Vision was careful not to commit to a specific time frame for the redemption processes, not even to the time mentioned twice in QD as the duration of the messiah's banquet (1300 years). Only one apocalyptic unit of time is mentioned in the Vision, and it appears in four Daniel traditions that share similarities. This is the “flexible time” unit of the era of redemption.

²³⁶ Parts of this section draw on and extend my earlier formulation; see Ben-Sasson, “The Vision of Daniel,” 352–355.

6.2 Flexible Time

A flight into the wilderness is also mentioned in the seventh-century Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel:

All the ends of the earth will be terrified and agitated, and [fear will fall] upon all peoples, nations, and tongues (after Dan 3:31), and upon those who dwell by the seas and those who live in the wilderness, and great fear will fall upon them and trembling will seize them. Then from the west they will flee to the east, and from the east to the west, and from the north to the south, and from the south to the north. (Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 98, v. 26)

The wilderness is the locus of an interim stay during messianic pangs as well as a site for rebuilding normal civilization in redemption times in all four visions of Daniel. There is, however, a unique calculation of time, a “flexible time,” in these works:

Vision of Daniel	QD	SyrD	Young Daniel
And for them a month will be like a week, a week like a day, and a day like an hour.	A month will be like a week, and a week will be like a day, and a day like an hour.	And the days will be short, and the days of the months will hasten, and the times of the year will be changed, and the courses of the sun and moon will be proved false.	The days of the months will be short, the days of the year will quickly go by. The courses of the sun and the moon will be changed, and those times will be filled with deception.

Other apocalypses, like the Book of Elijah, have traditions about the fixed dates of the future redemption. The Book of Elijah concludes: “Then will come the last day, which is as long as forty days.” Like other time periods in the Book of Elijah, this, too, is a fixed time period, the source of which may be a tradition that relates to the day on which humankind is judged.²³⁷

237 On flight to the wilderness in the Syriac vision of Daniel see above, ch. 5.3; Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 98; on flexibility of time, see Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 82; Brock, “Young Daniel,” 275–277; on other similarities between these four visions of Daniel, see above, ch. 4.1. For other apocalypses see Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 46 [= *Beit Ha-Midrash* 3, 67]; see also the different fixed calculations of *Alpha Beta De-Rabbi Akiba* relating to forty days: “The next day is forty days long, for it takes forty days for a fetus to form, and the Torah was given in forty days. Therefore, he is judged according to that day which is forty days, like the day of man, but not like the day of the Holy One, blessed be He, for the day of the Holy One, blessed be He, is a thousand years” (*Beit Ha-Midrash* 3:39).

The different and unique temporal rhythm of the end of days already features in Daniel 9:25–27, where several figures of weeks (7, 62, 1, ½) are mentioned and left for readers to decipher.²³⁸

“Flexible time,” like “encrypted time,” is a vital component of apocalyptic visions. The damage caused to the faithful upon the dashing of hopes connected to a concrete time can bring about the denial of future redemption. Indicating the possibility that the times of redemption will be “flexible” creates an opening for the hope that the times will not only extend but also be shortened, compressed. “Flexible time” is a moderate expression of the cosmic changes found in eschatological works. *Prima facie*, its use does not require the upheaval of nature and the world order. Therefore, the redemptive processes can appear suddenly, with an abbreviation of the bad years, like those described in connection with the flight to the wilderness. The description of “return” appears in apocalyptic visions, in the sense of a return to the mythic time after the exodus from Egypt, with all its formative components, including redemption, lawgiving, and the formation of a people. The joining of “mythic time” with “apocalyptic time” is expected, for in both cases, rules prevail that are different from the rules that govern normal times. They are concrete times with a beginning and end, which entail events; they need not be consecutive or develop according to the normal course of our world. They are dramatic, dangerous times; they contain enchantment and are pregnant with possibility; when such times flow, their heroes are not subject to any temporal influence. Rather, they control time by giving direction to regular events.²³⁹

238 On the calculation of days in its Scriptural contexts, see Segal, *Daniel*, 168–171. This scheme in the Book of Daniel was mediated extensively during the centuries preceding the text of the Vision of Daniel. The calculation of the times and identification of the various fragments and figures it contains have been the subject of numerous interpretations of the Church Fathers and, to a lesser extent, the Rabbis. Compare to what has been said about “the motif of time-compression,” with additional examples, by John C. Reeves, “An Enochic Citation in Barnabas 4.3 and the Oracles of Hystaspes,” in *Pursuing the Text: Studies in Honor of Ben Zion Wacholder*, ed. John C. Reeves and John Kampen (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 265–267. (I thank the anonymous reader at *Harvard Theological Review* for this contribution.)

239 On the encounter between historical time and apocalyptic time with all its components as an opportunity to shatter linear time by returning to ideal-mythic time, see Yonina Garber-Talmon, “The Concept of Time in Primitive Myths,” *Iyyun* 2 (1952): 201–214 [Hebrew]; Funkenstein, “Schedule,” 48–49; Nissan Rubin, *Twisting Frames: Dynamics of Change in Rabbinic Literature* (Jerusalem: Hillel Ben-Hayim, 2019), 130–149 [Hebrew]. On the importance of the linear component of eschatological time and its “shattering” through ritual, see also: Claudine Gauthier, “Temps et eschatology,” *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 2.162 (2013): 123–141, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-archives-de-sciences-sociales-des-religions-2013-2-page-123.htm>; accessed June 25, 2024.

In the four visions of Daniel as well, up until the time of redemption, processes unfold within the normal temporal world order. The “prophesied” events that happened and were still happening, traumatic as they may have been, occurred within a normal natural and temporal framework. It was therefore sufficient for the author to include them as part of the divine plan. Transitional, liminal “flexible time” is deployed for the transition to the eschatological era, the age of redemption. At the beginning of the eschatological era, the mythic figures of messiahs and their enemies become active, and they, too, will perform deeds that conform to the normal functioning of the world order. They will wage large-scale wars and perform great acts of artifice that seem miraculous. The true miracle—the resurrection of the dead—remains to signify the truth of the ultimate redeemer, Messiah ben David.

6.3 Future Time and the Order of the Events

The examination of apocalyptic texts, within the disciplines of literary and philosophical research, is usually conducted in relation to mystical thought and other apocalyptic texts. This is due to the realm of ideas concerning the supernatural and mythological, and to the lexicon shared by apocalyptic works and mystical concepts. Supporting this contextual examination is the tendency to study genres through specific disciplines and to explore the relationships between them—connections of language, content, influence, and chronological order of earlier and later works. As research into apocalyptic writings progresses within their genre, it becomes possible to conduct comparative analyses between apocalyptic texts from different religions, cultures, and periods, which can in turn highlight the unique

On the link between mythic time and eschatological time, see Galit Hasan-Rokem and Israel Jacob Yuval, “Myth, History, and Eschatology in a Rabbinic Treatise on Birth,” in *Talmudic Transgressions: Engaging the Work of Daniel Boyarin*, ed. Charlotte E. Fonrobert et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 243–273. On the sharing of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions and their amalgamation in sketching the figure of a charlatan messiah, see Rubin, *Between Jerusalem and Mecca*, 67, 102–4. Calculations based on “mythic time” like the exodus from Egypt became part of the mechanism for schematic calculations and were fit to reality as it developed. For example, it seems unlikely that a figure like Moses of Crete (see above, 124–126) could have been accepted by the Jews unless there was an acceptable calculation of apocalyptic time behind these events. For a thorough treatment of these schematic mechanisms in late antique Jewish and Christian societies, see Irshai, “Chronography and Apocalypse”. See also the much more thorough treatment of mechanisms for coordination and alteration and the forces that affected them (primarily in the Latin west, though the underlying logic was similar in the east as well) in Landes, “Lest the Millennium be Fulfilled,” 137–209. [Note by Oded Irshai.]

content of these works within the broader context of their composition. This is the synchronic, content-based examination, discussed in several introductory chapters concerning particular motifs that appear in other apocalyptic works—both Jewish and non-Jewish, not necessarily contemporary to the Vision of Daniel. In the next section, we propose a synchronic-historical examination.

Apocalyptic visions purport to foresee the future, and they utilize the past and present to accumulate authority for the vision; since part of the vision has already come to pass, one may presume that the remainder of the vision was spoken with divine inspiration. Additional authority is conferred upon these visions when they employ patterns and embed verses from earlier authoritative visions that have achieved canonical sanctity, such as the visions of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

We have already outlined the descriptions of future events (63–74, 88–90), so here we will reproduce just the basic structure:

II. Messianic Birth Pangs

A. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Camp of his Enemies: The Northerners and Gog and Magog

- a. Transitional section, from the slaughter of the Ishmaelites to their flight to the desert
- b. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Northerners besiege Babylon, despoiling, and the flight of the residents
- c. The fearsome appearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi
- d. Gog and Magog join his camp
- e. The persecution of Israel, destruction of enemies, and salvation of Israel by God

B. Daniel's Fear and the Angel's Interpretation

C. Armilus, Son of the Female Figure, and his Camp

- a. Armilus and the Son of the Daughter of Levi
- b. Armilus's appearance
- c. Armilus's camp
- d. Armilus claims to be the messiah
 - i. First wonder: bringing food to the faithful
 - ii. His messiahship is accepted
 - iii. Armilus and his camp in the holy place (Jerusalem?)

D. Armilus, the Righteous Man of Ephraim [Messiah ben Joseph?] and his Camp: The First Encounter

- a. The direct challenge to Armilus's messiahship
- b. Signs of his messiahship: The Staff of Moses and Jar of Manna

E. The Response to Armilus's Messiah Claims by the Righteous Man of Ephraim and his Jewish Followers: First Flight to the Wilderness

- a. Prayer and Lament
- b. God's response
 - i. The promise for the future
 - ii. God's counsel for dealing with Armilus—the question of resurrection

F. Armilus, Messiah ben Joseph, and his Camp: Second Encounter

- a. The request to resurrect the dead
- b. Armilus's reaction—killing Messiah ben Joseph

G. The Response of the Faithful to the Killing of Messiah ben Joseph: the Second Flight to the Wilderness of Judea

- a. Lament and prayer
- b. God's providence for the faithful who fled
 - i. the miracle of food and drink

III. The Redemption

A. The Destruction of Remaining Enemies

- a. Messiah ben Joseph fights Armilus and his camp
- b. The remaining enemies destroy one another
- c. The Splitting of the Mount of Olives and the appearance of the rescuers: Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and Elijah
- d. Messiah ben David, incinerates the enemies

B. Healing the People and Repairing the World

- a. Ingathering of exiles and resurrection of the dead
- b. The rebuilt Jerusalem descends
- c. The patriarchs, Abraham and Moses, arrive in Jerusalem

C. The Messianic Era

- a. Eternal life
- b. The Banquet of the Messiah
- c. The return of the priesthood and Temple service

D. Conclusion of the Vision

- a. Daniel's joy
- b. The angel is revealed
- c. The charge of Jeremiah, Elijah, and Zerubbabel to write down the Vision
- d. The Vision is revealed to Ezra and Israel
- e. The conclusion of the Vision

The surviving parts of the Vision move along a linear timeline, embedding verses and references to canonic, biblical visions and aligning it with the aforementioned patterns, thus connecting it to them.

John Reeves has dealt with the typical pattern of many of the visions in his discussion of the architectonics of Near Eastern Apocalyptic, where he points out that:

Comparison of Near Eastern Jewish, Christian, and Muslim apocalypses of late antiquity and the early medieval era exhibits a series of remarkable **structural correspondences** which reach across the permeable boundaries of ethnic and religious affiliation ... these apocalypses reveal a number of common motifs, dramatis personae, and discursive sequences.²⁴⁰

It is not surprising that a comparison of the Vision of Daniel to the outline proposed by Reeves shows structural similarities between the Vision and other works. Our interest here is primarily in what makes the Vision **different and unique** from the general structure of apocalyptic visions, and to that end, we have reproduced an outline of the Vision side-by-side with Reeves's general outline of Near Eastern apocalyptic texts, using Reeves's numbering scheme.²⁴¹

Reeves's Structural Comparison of Near Eastern Apocalyptic	The Vision of Daniel
1. deterioration of society and nature	[The "Vague List" of the Kings of Ishmael]
a. wars between the 'kingdoms'	a. The war of the 'king from the East' against Egypt and the He-Goat
b. pestilence, famine, earthquakes, etc.	b. A bloodbath, including war, plague, and famine
2. advent of Gog and Magog	2. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Camp of his Enemies: The Northerners and Gog and Magog
	(Transitional section) The slaughter of the Ishmaelites and their flight to the desert
a. more animal than human	a. The Son of the Daughter of Levi and the Northerners besiege Babylon, despoiling, and the flight of the residents
b. eat corpses, drink blood, etc.	b. The fearsome appearance of the Son of the Daughter of Levi

²⁴⁰ Reeves, *Trajectories*, 17; his full discussion of "The Architectonics of Near Eastern Apocalyptic" is at 17–24.

²⁴¹ Based on Reeves, *Trajectories*, 18.

(continued)

	Gog and Magog join his camp
	The persecution of Israel, destruction of enemies, and salvation of Israel by God
3. Rome/ Ishmael reigns supreme	
a. necessary for eschaton	
b1. advent of Messiah b. Joseph	[Missing from the Vision, but found, in part, in QD; the Son of the Daughter of Levi corresponds to the first enemy of the messiah.]
b2. Last Emperor abdicates	
c. in Jerusalem	
d. sometimes restores Temple	
4. advent of Antichrist/Armilos/Dajjal	4. Armilus, Son of the Female Figure, and his Camp
	Armilus and the Son of the Daughter of Levi
a. conceived of a foul union involving Satan and Jews in Palestine	a. Armilus's appearance
b. assumes royal power in or near Jerusalem (sometimes restores Temple)	b. Armilus's camp
c. decrees he must be worshiped as God	c. Armilus claims to be the messiah First wonder: bringing food to the faithful
d. many are deceived by him, especially the Jews/gentiles	d. His messiahship is accepted
e. holds sway for 3 ½ years	e. Armilus and his camp in the holy place (Jerusalem?)
Armilus, the Righteous Man of Ephraim [Messiah ben Joseph?] and his Camp: The First Encounter	
The direct challenge to Armilus's messiahship	
Signs of his messiahship: The Staff of Moses and Jar of Manna	
The Response to Armilus's Messiah Claims by the Righteous Man of Ephraim and his Jewish Followers: First Flight to the Wilderness	
Prayer and Lament	
God's response	
The promise for the future	
God's counsel for dealing with Armilus—the question of resurrection	

(continued)

5. mission of Enoch and Elijah/ Messiah b. Joseph a. refute and denounce the Antichrist b. are slain by him	5. Armilus, Messiah ben Joseph, and his Camp: Second Encounter a. The request to resurrect the dead b. Armilus's reaction—killing Messiah ben Joseph
	The Response of the Faithful to the Killing of Messiah ben Joseph: the Second Flight to the Wilderness of Judea Lament and prayer God's providence for the faithful who fled The miracle of food and drink The miracle of flexible time—shortened time periods in advance of the redemption The Destruction of Remaining Enemies (6b) Messiah ben Joseph fights Armilus and his camp The remaining enemies destroy one another
6. parousia of Christ/advent of Messiah b. David a. accompanied by angels and Cross/Elijah b. resurrection of Enoch and Elijah/Messiah b. Joseph c. general resurrection of the faithful/ plus ingathering of the exiles d. slays Antichrist/Armilos with 'breath' e. all malefactors and Satan dispatched to hell f. faithful rewarded with eternal life. g. new heaven, new earth, new Temple, etc.	6. The Splitting of the Mount of Olives and the appearance of the rescuers: Messiah ben David, Zerubbabel, and (6a) Elijah d. Messiah ben David, incinerates the enemies Healing the People and Repairing the World c. Ingathering of exiles and resurrection of the dead The rebuilt Jerusalem descends The patriarchs, Abraham and Moses, arrive in Jerusalem The Messianic Era f. Eternal life g. The Banquet of the Messiah

In his essay, Reeves offers two main explanations for the structural similarity between many Near Eastern apocalypses of the three major monotheistic religions:

One explanation for their relative univocality is undoubtedly the largely shared '**biblical**' **substrate** which undergirds the apocalyptic ideology of this region and epoch.

Another influential factor shaping a common scriptural culture involves the phenomenon of **textual commerce**, whereby the literary products of one culture are appropriated, tweaked, adapted, adjusted, and rebutted by others who are themselves the producers and/or consumers of competing apocalypses. Individual conversions to the dominant religious affiliation provided a vehicle for the parallel movement of writings and teachings from one community to another, thereby augmenting (often via linguistic translation from Hebrew and Syriac into Arabic) the scriptural and parascriptural resources available for apocalyptic reasoning and speculation.

Thus far we have discussed general and common elements. The outline of the end times presented in the table indicates an expansion unique to the Vision of Daniel, namely, the section on the wilderness (discussed above, ch. 5.3), as part of the broader discussion of the enemies of the messiah—the Son of the Daughter of Levi, Armilus, and Gog and Magog. The dialogue between the fleeing Israelites and their various pursuers receives detailed attention in the Vision, but this is also found in other compositions.

Previous chapters have highlighted other features that are unique to the Vision yet similar to a limited number of related works. These features enable us to define closer links due to temporal or even geographical proximity between adherents of different religions. Polemics between different sects and religions should be included among the circumstances of these similarities. Many compositions, especially apocalyptic ones, were central to religious disputations conducted through various channels: live discussions between scholars or disputants—such as Rabbi Hai Gaon’s suggestion that Christian-Nestorian clergy be consulted concerning the interpretation of a verse in Psalms—and the *majlis*, gatherings convened for theological debate (by circles in Mosul, Baghdad, and Cairo, for instance). Works were copied, translated, and studied within the context of polemical study.²⁴² Polemical engagement was a ‘semi-selective’ way to legitimately adopt the opposing camp’s content and attitudes. Presenting the opposing views does not necessarily entail rejecting the structure of the initial argument; on the contrary, it is likely to be deemed effective precisely if it maintains the structure of the original argument—be it the interpretation of a verse, well-organized rhetoric, or meticulous imitation of a work that is subject to criticism and debate.

²⁴² See above, ch. 4.3.a. On R. Hai Gaon and the ‘Katholikos’, see Menahem Ben-Sasson, Miriam Frenkel, and Nadia Zeldes, *The Jews of Sicily, 825–1068: Documents and Sources* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 1991), 134–135 [Hebrew]; Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries*, 590–591, n. 331. On theological, exegetical discussions and lively meetings of scholars dedicated to learning and discourse, see Stroumsa, “Oriental Intellectual Convivencia,” 16–25; Sarah Stroumsa, “Logic as Interconfessional Weapon in the Early Islamicate World: Mantīq, Qiyās, Kalām,” *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 72:3–4 (2020): 181–201; Sarah Stroumsa, “Convivencia in the Medieval Islamic East: al-Raqqa, Mosul, Aleppo,” in *Eine dreifältige Schnur: Über Judentum, Christentum und Islam in Geschichte und Wissenschaft*, ed. Sarah Stroumsa and Guy G. Stroumsa (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 9–127.

6.4 Eschatological Concepts in Historical Contexts: Synchronic-Historical Examination

Discussion of the connection between historical events and apocalyptic texts is the main avenue for apocalypses and the literary genres in which they were written (visions, exegesis, poetry, polemics, and letters) to attain academic ‘legitimacy’ and bring them to the forefront of research. Through historical analysis, it is possible to skip over the examination of prophetic visions, delusions, and naive beliefs, and situate these works within the field of history, interpreting the obscure in light of the revealed and enriching the known and manifest by means of the apocalyptic work.

With respect to the section of the Vision where the prophecy has already been fulfilled, it is possible that the author of the Vision intentionally aligned the number of rulers who actually reigned with a number that echoes the commonly accepted number of rulers in apocalyptic literature—ten, twenty, or twelve (see the discussion of the genre above, 58–59, 97–98).

The description of the rulers already contains allusions that the periods of their reign are part of a grand plan leading to redemption. Despite explicitly naming the caliphs, the military campaigns are indicated by the cardinal directions—kings of the West and East; the movement of forces across the expanses of the world is also defined in terms of the cardinal directions. In the description of the reign of Abū Dja’far, the allusion is more explicit; interpreted in light of parallel works, this passage of the Vision describes how Abū Dja’far intended to hide the treasures he amassed during his life for himself or his heirs in the distant future. However, according to the Vision and its parallels, this desire will not come to fruition; rather, the treasures will be given to the Israelites at the time of the redemption, after the messiah arrives, in fulfillment of the verse: “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places” (Isa 45:3). If there were other allusions to the end of days in the author’s description of this period, they may have become corrupted during editing (see above, 96). In the historical description of the next caliph, al-Mahdī, the phrase “There will be peace, and falsehood will proliferate in the world” may hint at the era preceding the messianic era as described in *m. Sotah* 9:15: “During the footsteps of the messiah [i.e., the era preceding the messiah’s arrival], insolence will increase ... and truth will be lacking.” The next two rulers are characterized by a dangerous global trend: “his desire will be to destroy the world” (Musa), and “his desire is to destroy the world in its entirety” (Hārūn). This description mirrors the intent of Gog, as found in *Aggadat Ha-Mashi’ah*:

For he will **destroy all the nations of the world** who are named after Seth, as scripture states: “for God has established another seed for me” (Gen 4:25). And after all this, Gog and Magog will hear and come up against them, as scripture says: “the kings of the earth stand

together, and rulers sit in council together against the Lord and His Messiah" (Ps 2:2). (Reeves, *Trajectories*, 146; Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 104, 391)²⁴³

The time of the composition of the Vision has been suggested as a transitional period, between the rulers whose names are explicitly mentioned and the rulers whose names the author intentionally concealed, to instill in readers a sense of the text's future-telling credibility. This is the unit that we have called the "Vague List" of the kings of Ishmael (1b, 20–2a, 1, 1:10). The author seems to convey that just as he 'predicted' what happened in his own time, he also knows how to foresee the end times. To give his words an apocalyptic dimension, he integrates into this unit concepts that are specific to the eschaton, such as the extensive bloodshed. Thus: "and all his days he will shed blood ... He will shed blood ... He will capture it and shed much blood ... He will shed an inestimable amount of blood therein. And he will turn back and come to Damascus and shed blood in it like water" (1b, 2, 6, 22, 25–2a, 1; 1:7, 10).

Alongside this, great destruction is described—"In their days, there will be sword, pestilence, and famine. And they will be erased and pass from the world as though they never were" (2a, 3–4; 1:10)—based on the portrait of the end of days from Ezekiel 14. The most characteristic feature is the designation of the king from the West who wages war against the king from the East with the mythic Scriptural term from Daniel chapter 8's description of the end times: the He-Goat. According to the interpretation proposed above, those reading these words in the time of

²⁴³ Concerning the 'destruction of the world,' see also the Book of Elijah (Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 45, 376); *Pirkei Eliyahu* (*ibid.* 53, 378). Armilus is mentioned in connection with the destruction of all: "His name is Armilus and he will destroy the people and the Hebrew language" (Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 387, based on MS Oxford Heb. D. 11, 248r–251r, published by Levi). See also Himmelfarb, *Zerubbabel*, 152, and n. 27. Concerning this difficult passage, Reeves, *Trajectories*, 59, n. 135 states: "The phrase is corrupt in all witnesses, but it is clear that an etymology is offered here for the name 'Armilos,' one that is moreover dependent not upon Hebrew but upon Greek Ἐρημόλαος, "destroyer of a people" (see the use of this same designation for "the little horn, Satan" in *Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati* [ed. N. Bonwetsch; Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, phil.-hist. klass., n.f., bd. 12, nr. 3; Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1910], 60, 74, 86; cited by David M. Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994], 170–171, 173–174) and which is furthermore consonant with the folk etymology for the name 'Balaam' (בלעם) supplied in *b. Sanh.* 105a (בלע עם, destroyer of a people). See Lévi, "L'apocalypse" [= Israel Lévi, "L'apocalypse de Zerobabel et le roi de Perse Siroès," *REJ* 68 (1914), 69 (1914), and 71 (1920)], 152 n.6, and especially the persuasive arguments of David Berger, "Three Typological Themes in Early Jewish Messianism: Messiah son of Joseph, Rabbinic Calculations, and the Figure of Armilus," *AJSR* 10 (1985): 158–162".

Mu'taşim (the Eastern king) and Theophilos (the Western king) would be able to locate themselves and their expectations within the details of the Vision.

From this point forward, the Vision transitions to the end times, offering detailed mythic descriptions of the end of days according to the stages of redemption. In this part, the use of apocalyptic concepts is dense, evoking parallels to other instances of the genre in the Bible, later literature, and works of other religions. Most of the allusions resonate with eschatological visions in the Bible, especially: Deuteronomy (2 references), Isaiah (2), Jeremiah (3), Ezekiel (3), Zechariah (2), and Daniel.

6.5 The Eclectic Method of the Vision of Daniel

From the twenty or so comparisons made during the discussion, several lines of similarity emerge—in structure and specific details—between the Vision of Daniel and other eschatological works. The most patently similar work is QD, which is so obviously similar that we propose using QD to reconstruct the missing parts of the Vision. There is some partial resemblance between the Vision and both “The Secrets of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai” and “The Prayer of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai.” Several points of similarity were also found with traditions linked to the Book of Elijah.

The Vision shares a general structure and numerous motifs with apocalyptic literature in general, but these commonalities do not indicate a close relationship between the Vision and other compositions, whether Jewish or non-Jewish. Exceptional in this regard is the tradition about the Son of the Daughter of Levi, which is unique to apocalyptic visions (but not to QD): the Vision, the Syriac Vision of Daniel, Young Daniel (also written in Syriac), and the Muslim tradition of Nu'aym. We found several more similarities between the Vision and the Syriac visions, including the three flights to the wilderness and the absence of the Temple in the final stage of redemption, when Jerusalem descends, fully built, from the heavens. Despite these points of resemblance, these works are not similar to the Vision with regard to their overall structure, nor in most of their details.

The surviving eschatological literature of the different religious traditions does not presently allow us to identify a specific tradition reflected in the Vision. This conclusion aligns with suggestions made by scholars who previously attempted to construct schools of thought and traditions based on the remnants of eschatological literature. What survives indicates similarities and common theological and literary elements. This is not sufficient to posit systematic copying and complete influence. The scarcity of surviving works and the movement of texts across different geographical regions—where their security was compromised—and from different

religious groups allowed authors to liberally borrow parts of one eschatological work in the composition of new works.

6.6 Concluding Comments

The Vision of Daniel is thus a Hebrew eschatological work composed in the late-ninth century and relating to contemporary events, in an area under Muslim control, where the caliphate battled the Byzantine Empire. The work draws from Scriptural, Midrashic, and especially apocalyptic Jewish sources but also interfaces with Christian and Muslim theological realms, especially in those parts devoted to enemies of the messiah and the world, which invert and incorporate non-Jewish eschatological images. During the era of the Vision's composition, several Jewish false messiahs appeared, offering alternative models of Jewish leadership and worldviews that altered the natural and temporal order. The Vision is true to the legacy of tradition both in the behavior it expects from the Jewish public and in the conception of time it proposes. In its view, the persecutions, crises, and pressures faced by the Jews are part of a larger image of the world that assures ultimate redemption, irrespective of repentance. Miracles—direct divine intervention in wars, ingathering of exiles, the descent of the Temple, the resurrection of the dead, and the end of death—occur only at the end of the redemptive process; the only condition of the fulfillment of the redemption is loyalty to tradition and commitment to this historical worldview.

Appendix: **Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl in Judeo-Persian**

Copied, translated, annotated, and introduced by Dan Shapira

Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl

Qiṣṣa-ye Dāniyāl (QD) is a text in a variety of Judeo-Persian written in Hebrew characters and copied or translated around 1600. It is a [pseudo-]historical midrash with strong apocalyptic and eschatological overtones.

The text was first published by Hermann Zotenberg in 1869 with a German translation.¹ Then, in 1886, the segment of the work concerning Parthian and Sasanian history was published by James Darmesteter, with a French translation, in Arabo-Persian characters with the Hebrew and Aramaic words printed in Hebrew letters.² A Hebrew translation, apparently from German, was made by Abraham Kaplan (printed in 1855³ and again in 1954 in *Midrashei Geula*).⁴ A section of the text was translated into Hebrew by Shaul Shaked from the original Judeo-Persian.⁵

I had prepared my own Hebrew edition cum translation from Judeo-Persian (along with other texts in this language) in the early 1990s, and in the late 1990s, Professor Menahem Ben-Sasson encouraged me to publish my Hebrew translation together with the text.⁶

This encouragement came in the framework of a seminar held by Professor Ben-Sasson in his home, where seminar participants were discussing a new apocalyptic text in Hebrew found by Professor Ben-Sasson in the Firkovich Collection in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg. It emerged that Ben-Sasson's new text has much in common with the middle and some later parts of QD. It now appears that the two texts have a common source, and what has survived in QD most probably corresponds, at least partly, to the lost parts of Ben-Sasson's docu-

1 Who translated the title as *Ma'aseh Daniel* ("The Story of Daniel"); Hermann Zotenberg, "Geschichte Daniels: Ein Apokriph," *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments* 1 (1869): 385–427. On the meaning of the word 'qiṣṣa' see below, p. 187, n. 60.

2 James Darmesteter, "L'apocalypse persane de Daniel," *Mélanges Renier. Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études* 73 (1887): 405–420.

3 Adolph Jellinek, *Beit ha-Midrash*, vol. 5 (Leipzig: Friedrich Nies Wien, 1855), 117–130.

4 Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula*, 199–228.

5 See Benjamin Z. Kedar, "Jews and Samaritans in the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem," *Tarbiz* 53 (1983–84): 387 [Hebrew].

6 Shapira, "Qiṣṣa." Gil, "Zerubbabel," 1–98, contends that QD seems to be partly inspired by the Judeo-Arabic Book of Zerubbabel that is the subject of his article. On page 5, he quotes QD, albeit with distortions and using a nineteenth-century translation. It is evident that Professor Gil did not read my article, though it appeared in his bibliography, and I am cited on p. 35, n. 80).

ment, which he called “the Vision of Daniel” (or simply “the Vision” in the present work).⁷

It also appears that this prototype of both QD and the Vision was a constantly-updated reworking of a Jewish text from which was derived a newly found Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel,⁸ a seventh-century Christian work, which points back to an earlier, lost Jewish apocalypse.

For this reason, I have decided to re-edit my previous work and provide an English translation. The present work is not a mechanical reproduction of my Hebrew work in English; rather, both the Judeo-Persian text and my rendering of it into another language were revised, as I found several errors in my previous work.

1 The Manuscript and Its Entourage

The sole manuscript of QD resides at the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, under shelf mark MS héb 128, fs. 72b–96a.⁹ It has been digitized and can be viewed online.¹⁰ It is part of a group of manuscripts (MS héb 130) that includes the Book of Tobit, the biblical Book of Daniel,¹¹ Bel and the Dragon (an apocryphal addition to Daniel),¹² the Book of Judith, and the Scroll of Antiochus.¹³ I have prepared an edition of these texts with an English translation.

7 Menahem Ben-Sasson, “Vision of Daniel”; Ben-Sasson, “Interreligious Discourse”; Ben-Sasson, “Messiahs and Anti-Messiahs;” Ben-Sasson, “Interreligious Encounter;” Ben-Sasson, “Similar Versions.”

8 Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*.

9 By the time of publishing my 1998 article, I was not aware of Jes P. Asmussen, “A Judeo-Persian Daniel Apocalypse,” in *In the Last Days: On Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic and Its Period*, ed. Knud Jeppesen, Kirsten Nielsen, and Bent Rosendal (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1994), 38–40, and Jes P. Asmussen, and Hamid Dadkhah, “En jødisk-persisk Daniel apocalypse, en oversættelse af en apokryf Daniel tekst,” *Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift* 61.3 (1998): 199–215. I recently received a copy of the latter work.

10 See “Bible. A.T. Daniel (hébreu-persan). Iran”, *Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits*, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10885405t>, accessed October 27, 2025.

11 MS héb 128 (the first part) and MS héb 129. See Ernst Mainz, “Le livre de Daniel en judéo-persan,” *Irano-Judaica* 1 (1982): 148–179. This edition must be revised in the light of newer research.

12 See Dan Shapira, “Bel and the Dragon: A Judaeo-Persian Version of the Biblical Apocrypha,” *Irano-Judaica* 5 (2003): 52–67.

13 See Itai Kagan, “The Aramaic Scroll of Antiochus: Preliminary Linguistic Observations,” *Lešonenu. A Journal for the Study of the Hebrew Language and Cognate Subjects* 86.2 (2024): 119–145 [Hebrew]. I hope to publish the Judeo-Persian version of the Scroll of Antiochus very soon.

These manuscripts were copied and/or translated for the Habsburgian-Italian diplomat, traveler, Hebraist, and Orientalist (in the broader sense) Giovambattista (Giovanni Battista in modern convention) Vecchietti (1552–1619)¹⁴ around 1600 in the southern Iranian city of Lār,¹⁵ which was then commercially important.

Additional manuscripts of Bible translations into a certain type of Judeo-Persian, known collectively as the “Judeo-Persian Bible of Paris,”¹⁶ also came from Vecchietti, a collector of Jewish manuscripts from the era of Abbās the Great (1588–1629) of Persia. Vecchietti intended to print a complete Catholic Bible in Judeo-Persian (hence his interest in the books of the Apocrypha, which are included in the Catholic Bible but not the Hebrew Bible) believing this would prompt the spread of Catholicism in Iran, India, and the East Indies, where Persian was the main language of culture at the time.

These books of the Apocrypha, together with some other Judeo-Persian texts, were said to predate the sixteenth century;¹⁷ however, the different Judeo-Persian translations sometimes have different dialectal bases,¹⁸ so their written languages may represent different rates and stages of linguistic development (let alone different geographical spaces).

Later, Gilbert Lazard proclaimed that Vecchietti’s manuscripts “all belong to the early fourteenth century.”¹⁹ Of course, this statement by the renowned French Iranist and great savant of things Judeo-Persian should be understood as referring to dating *the language*, not necessarily the age of the documents recorded in this language. People continued writing in dead languages for centuries. We should also

14 See Walter J. Fischel, “The Bible in Persian Translation,” *Harvard Theological Review* 45.1 (1952): 7–8.

15 This is evident from the colophon to the manuscript that contains Tobith, Judith, Bel and the Dragon, QD, and the Scroll of Antiochus.

16 Dan Shapira, “Hosea from the ‘Paris Bible’,” (MA thesis, Hebrew University, 1993). See also a short article based on this thesis: Dan Shapira, “Traces of a *Tafsīr* of Hosea Ascribed to Rav (Pseudo? -) Saadia Gaon in a Judeo-Persian *Tafsīr*,” in *Ben Ever la-Arav. Contacts between Arabic Literature and Jewish Literature in the Middle Ages and Modern Times*, vol. 7, ed. Yosef Tobi (Haifa: Afikim, 2014), 186–208 [Hebrew].

17 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 4, 864.

18 See Gilbert Lazard, “La dialectologie du Judéo-Persan,” *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 8 (1968): 77–98.

19 Gilbert Lazard, “Lumières nouvelles sur la formation de la langue persane. Une traduction du Coran en persan dialectal et ses affinités avec le judéo-persan,” *Irano-Judaica* 2 (1990): 194.

add that the language of the Judeo-Persian Apocrypha is more archaic than that of the (earlier) famous Judeo-Persian Pentateuch translation by ben Ṭāwūs (1546).²⁰

The fact that most, if not all, Hebrew prototypes of these Judeo-Persian manuscripts of Tobit, Bel and the Dragon, Judith, the Scroll of Antiochus have some links to Istanbul is also illuminating. It could be that the Hebrew sources of QD, Judith, Bel and the Dragon, Tobit, and the Scroll of Antiochus copied and translated in Lār were brought there by Vecchiotti himself—some in the form of European and Constantinople imprints—or handwritten copies of those—for the purpose of translation. This may lead to the cautious assumption, in my opinion, that QD's Hebrew (or Aramaic) *Vorlage*²¹ was extant in the early sixteenth century, at least, if not earlier; perhaps it will yet be found. But still, we are much in the dark.

2 The Structure of QD and the Vision of Daniel, and their Antecedents

QD is set as a development of certain motifs from the biblical Book of Daniel and other Jewish texts. The initial setting was made earlier than that of the biblical Daniel by providing exposition of Dan 1:1 in QD 1–10 (using material from 2 Kings, Zechariah, *Solomon's Throne*, and other works). QD 1 claims Daniel's origin in the royal family of David (Dan 1:3 states that he was “from the seed of the royal family and the nobility”; the term for ‘nobility’ used here is *Arsacid* for “the first-most ones.”²²)

The biblical Daniel has a set of six court tales in chapters 1 through 6, written mostly in Aramaic, to which QD's set of four or five court tales (QD 11–19) roughly corresponds. Chapters 7 through 12 of Daniel contain four apocalyptic visions in Hebrew; in QD, Daniel's prophecies begin in section 20. The end of the original framework of QD was built on Dan 12:1–2, quoted in QD 46.

²⁰ Fischel, “Bible in Persian,” 8. See also: Paola Orsatti, “The Judeo-Persian Pentateuch of Constantinople and the Beginnings of Persian linguistic studies in Europe,” *Irano-Judaica* 4 (1999): 170–178 (plus four plates).

²¹ Linguistically, QD is written in a simple prose style, unlike its ‘family members’ translated from medieval pseudo-Biblical Hebrew, with *Waw Consecutivus* rendered in Judeo-Persian.

²² *partamīm* (פַּרְתָּמִים; Est 1:3, 6:9; Dan 1:3), from Old Persian *fratama*, was generally rendered as *šryfn* (“nobles”) in Judeo-Persian Biblical translations, *pace* the *Targūm* with its *šrtygyn* (from Greek). According to Sa’adia, the Hebrew word is from *pyry tmym*, “fruits of the pure ones.” See Dan Shapira, “Judaean-Persian Translations of Old Persian Lexica: A Case of Linguistic Discontinuity,” in *Persian Origins – Early Judaeo-Persian and the Emergence of New Persian: Collected Papers of the Symposium, Göttingen 1999*, ed. Ludwig Paul (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 223.

In order to provide a new dimension to understanding how Jewish apocalyp-
tics worked, I should note in passing what is found in the biblical Daniel but is
absent from QD, namely, Dan 12:4–7, the continuation of 12:1–2, which completes
and concludes the framework of QD. It is worthwhile to quote chapter 12 of Daniel
in full here (JPS 1985 translation):

1. At that time, the great prince, Michael, who stands beside the sons of your people, will appear. It will be a time of trouble, the like of which has never been since the nation came into being. At that time, your people will be rescued, all who are found inscribed in the book.
2. Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence.
3. And the knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.
4. “But you, Daniel, keep the words secret, and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will range far and wide and knowledge will increase.”
5. Then I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing, one on one bank of the river, the other on the other bank of the river.
6. One said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the water of the river, “How long until the end of these awful things?”
7. Then I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the water of the river, swear by the Ever-Living One as he lifted his right hand and his left hand to heaven: “For a time, times, and half a time; and when the breaking of the power of the holy people comes to an end, then shall all these things be fulfilled.”
8. I heard and did not understand, so I said, “My lord, what will be the outcome of these things?”
9. He said, “Go, Daniel, for these words are secret and sealed to the time of the end.
10. Many will be purified and purged and refined; the wicked will act wickedly and none of the wicked will understand; but the knowledgeable will understand.
11. (From the time the regular offering is abolished, and an appalling abomination is set up—it will be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.
12. Happy the one who waits and reaches one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.)
13. But you, go on to the end; you shall rest, and arise to your destiny at the end of the days.”

The vision of a ‘man’ (an angelic or divine being) above the waters of the river clad in *baddīm*—rendered as ‘linen’ in English translations since the King James Version, but probably some garment of light and energy—has its clear precedent

(in Hebrew literature) in Ezekiel 1,²³ and its successor in Mani, who receives his revelation on the waters.²⁴

This motif finds expression in Zoroastrianism as well. Zarathuštra was immersing in the Dāityā (“religious”) River for his ritual purification in the morning before the sacrifice of the Haoma. When he emerged from the water, on the riverbank, he met a luminous figure—Vohū Manah (the “Good Thought,” one of the *Ameša Spenta*, something like archangels of Ahura Mazda; Middle Iranian *Wahman*, Persian *Bahman*). Vohū Manah explained the world to Zarathuštra and led him to discover Ahura Mazda (*Zādspram* 22.1–9;²⁵ *Dēnkard* 8.3,51). Though *Zand-ī Wahman Yasn* (ZWY)²⁶ does not mention this episode, the contents of this apocalyptic composition contain an encounter between Ahura Mazda and Zarathuštra, with Ahura Mazda revealing to Zarathuštra the future.²⁷ As in Dan 12:5–6, there are only two actors on the waters, thus Dan 12:5–6 was based on Iranian lore.

3 The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel and QD

As for the new Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel (SyrD),²⁸ it begins with the statement, similar to Dan 11:1, that the visions of Daniel took place “in the kingdom of Darius the Mede who ruled over Persia, and in the kingdom of Alpachtan, King of Babylonia.”²⁹ SyrD also shares a number of motifs with QD, and in sequence:

23 See Peter Kingsley, “Ezekiel by the Grand Canal: Between Jewish and Babylonian Tradition,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Third Series* 2.3 (1992): 339–346; James Russell, “Ezekiel and Iran,” *Irano-Judaica* 5 (2003): 1–15.

24 Cf. Dan Shapira, Dan Shapira, “Mandaean and Quasi-Mandaean Prototypes of Some Expressions in the Greek Cologne Mani Codex: Stray Aramaicist’s Notes,” in *Proceedings of the 5th Conference of the Societas Iranologica Europea (Ravenna, 6–11 ottobre 2003)*, edited by Antonio C. D. Panaino and Andrea Piras (Milan: Mimesis Edizioni for the Societas Iranologica Europaea, 2006), 698.

25 Philippe Gignoux and Ahmad Tafazzoli, *Anthologie de Zādspram* (Paris: Association pour l’avancement des études iraniennes, 1993).

26 See Carlo G. Cereti, *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1995).

27 Geo Widengren, *The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God: Studies in Iranian and Manichaean Religion* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1945); Geo Widengren, *Muhammad, the Apostle of God, and His Ascension* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1955).

28 Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*.

29 “Alpachtan, King of Babylonia” draws on a Jewish source that had *peḥāh*, “governor,” as in Dan 3:2–3, 27; 6:8; Ezra 5:3, 6, 14; 6:6–7, 13; see also Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 67, n. 2, and note the prominent role of the governor Nebuzaradan in the narrative of QD 3, 5, 6 [eight occurrences].

The Throne of Solomon

SyrD 8 (Henze, 71)	QD 13 [79r]
	And Cyrus commanded that these vessels and vestments of holiness be brought to the Temple ³⁰
Only the golden throne on which King Solomon used to sit did the king spare and kept it in the treasury	and Solomon's throne he left to himself, and Cyrus sat on it

Darius becomes king

SyrD 9 (Henze, 71)	QD 13 [79v]
In the middle of the night Gemath the Magus rose, killed King Cyrus and seized the kingship in Persia.	After a year, Darius came and made war with Cyrus and defeated Cyrus and captured the kingdom; and he sat instead of Cyrus, as he had Cyrus killed.

Darius becomes Daniel's patron

SyrD 10 (Henze, 73)	QD 15 [79v]
King Darius wrote a letter about me to all Persian provinces and found me in the great city of Elam. I got up and came to the Gate of King Darius.	And after a number of days, Darius asked for me and wrote me a writ of protection

God strikes Darius's eyes

SyrD 11 (Henze, 74)	QD 17 [81v]
At that time God	Then God accepted my prayer
sent a heavenly angel who struck King Darius and took away the light of his eyes	and sent an angel and struck Darius's eyes, and made the king blind

³⁰ There is some ambiguity as to whether 'the Temple' refers to the entirety of Jerusalem or the Sanctuary proper.

Darius and Daniel go to Jerusalem to heal the king's eyes

SyrD 11 (Henze, 74–75)	QD 17–18 [81v–82r]
And it was shown to [Darius] in the vision that he should go to Jerusalem, go up to the House of the Lord and worship there, and there the light of his eyes would be given to him. The great King Darius sent and called for me that I should go with him to Jerusalem	(The king) demanded Daniel and said: “Come with me to the Temple and beg God on my behalf to restore my eyes.”
Then we went up to Jerusalem with a mighty army, and with many chariots, horsemen and soldiers we came up to Jerusalem, to the place of the house of my fathers.	The king took [with him] one thousand horsemen
Yet we found Jerusalem ravaged and void of her citizens and deserted by her residents. We [also] found there some of my kinsmen, but people of my age who had also been there during my time, during those days before Jerusalem had been carried into captivity I did not find.	18. And I, Daniel, went to the Temple, and when I saw the Temple, I said: “How long will the House of God be desolate, and the Israelites be scattered?”

Healing Darius's eyes with Jerusalem's waters

SyrD 11 (Henze, 74)	QD 18–19 [82r–v]
Furthermore, I washed him in the pool of Shiloah ³¹	God's angel said to me [...] “Go and bring Darius to the water and let him put [this] water on his face, and as he would put [this] water on his face, his eyes will be healed, God will restore the light of his eyes.”
and he believed in the God of my Fathers. [...] his eyes were opened and he saw the light. ³²	and his eyes were healed by the might of God, <blessed be> His name.

31 **ܫܠܘܗ**, with the Judeo-Aramaic, not the Greek, form of Siloah used. The JP censored the expression because of its Christian overtones (cf. John 9:1–7) having changed it to just “water.”

32 This is a Jewish motif of Darius's conversion to Judaism. In the first Christian centuries, “water; river-water” (*nhr*) and “light” (*nwhr*) were used as synonyms for Christian Enlightenment/ Baptism; this is kept best among Eastern Syriacs, Georgians, and, of course, Mandaeanes, but also can be traced to Hebrew usage (נְהַרָא דְנוּהָרָא).

(continued)

Praising the Living God, he walked through all the streets of Jerusalem.

19. (Darius) raised his eyes and praised God saying: “Blessed is the name of God of Daniel, He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, who has no equal or partner and He is the one who will raise the lowly and heal the blind. And through Daniel’s messengerhood, (God) healed my eyes.”

Return from Jerusalem

SyrD 12–13 (Henze, 74–75)

Darius led with him some of the priests and of the elders, and they went [with him] to Persia and Elam. [...] I went with him to Persia and Elam.

QD 18–19 [82r–v]

(Darius) returned to Shushtar, and he took me with him, and we went in peace.

We can see that crucial elements at the start of both SyrD and QD go back to the same (seventh century?) Jewish source, but after having described the return from Jerusalem. At this point, the two texts diverge; in SyrD, the eschatological section begins, whereas QD (section 20) first has Daniel’s lament of the Temple’s destruction and the lengthy exile of Israel. Moreover, while SyrD progresses directly to a description of the end of days, here begins QD’s lengthy synopsis of Iranian history (sections 21–38). This is the passage published by Darmesteter in Judeo-Persian transcription with a French translation. It is far from clear whether this description of the Arsacid-Sasanian period was part of the work underlying the Vision or not. It could have been an addition composed in or near Iran in the late Sasanian or post-Sasanian period.

Sections 22 and 23 of QD record the transition from Sasanian rule to Muslim rule:

22. [...] There will be an evil king and he will call himself “that of Paradise/Immortal Soul” [= Husraw I Anušīrwān] and he will call people before himself, and they will break down at once and will not stand up for ever. 23. And I, Daniel, saw that in those days a king would arise, and his stature would be short, and his color would be red, and he would have no possessions, and he would not read in God’s writings and call himself a prophet [= Muhammad]. And on top of a camel he will come and go, and he will be a camel-driver, and he will be from Yemen/the South, and he will submit human beings to his obedience.

The earth will be flattened, fulfilling Ezekiel's prophecy

SyrD 14 (Henze, 78–79)

There will be a great uproar from heaven until high mountains will be made equal to plains. Then will be gathered the four winds of heaven, one to the other, and there will be a great and vicious battle.

QD 51 [93r]

and when he blows the fourth shofar, the mountains will be flattened, and the world will be straightened and Mount Tabor and Carmel and Hermon and the Mount of Olives and it will be from a mountain to another mountain as far as eight parasangs and the Temple will come into sight as Ezekiel, peace be upon him, said.

The Messiah's banquet in Zion

In these passages, it is evident that the Christian SyrD is based on Jewish sources. The exclusion of the “uncircumcised and unclean” from the Messiah's banquet and the addition of “the entire offspring of Abraham” to the apparently original “the scattered of Judah,” attest to this. In contrast, in QD, the righteous among the nations of the world must ask individual permission to attend the banquet of the Messiah.

SyrD 39–40 (Henze, 117–118)

Yet the uncircumcised and unclean will not enter into her [= the New Jerusalem]. [...] Then the Mighty Lord will gather all the elect of Israel, all the scattered of Judah and the entire offspring of Abraham, and will celebrate a banquet for Zion and a feast for Jerusalem also, the Paschal feast and joy and glory, a banquet of peace, in the days of Christ [= the Messiah], at the salvation of Zion, also, at the assembling of the exiles of Israel and all of the just and righteous.

QD 53 [93v]

For one thousand and 300 years they will eat the Messiah's banquet, and the Temple will be built because all the peoples will hear the good news of the Israelites. They will come in groups of ten and twenty before the Israelites and speak to them, saying: “What crime have we committed and what have we sinned that you did not call us to the banquet?” And those who will come will be righteous people of the nations of the world [only].

57 [96r]

The Omnipresent, blessed be He, by His many faithful mercies and His great graces and His goodness, will once again gather the outcasts of Israel from the four corners of the world soon; and ye say: Amen. And may it be fulfilled through us the scripture that reads “The Lord rebuild Jerusalem; He gathers in the scattered of Israel” (Ps 147:2).

Moreover, the end of SyrD refers to those who “kept his commandments,” a phrase that clearly originated in a Jewish text. SyrD thus reflects an early version of a Jewish text that continued to be updated. As Ben-Sasson recognized and demonstrates in the main text of the present work (ch. 3.1), QD and the Vision contain common material that updated the earlier work.

4 The Judeo-Persian Text and English Translation

'n' dny'l mbny yknyah mlk' dbyt yhw dh	<i>I am Daniel, of the sons of Jeconiah, the king of the House of Judah.</i> ³⁴
mnm dny'l 'z pwsr'n ykny' p'dš'h k'nd'n yhw dh	I am Daniel, of the sons of Jeconiah, the king ³⁵ of the House of Judah. ³⁶
ky bwdm dr yrwšlm dr byt hmqdš wbwd b'ym' [*mr dy] wnm's yrm yh bn hlqyh bwd	When I was in <i>Jerusalem</i> , in the <i>Temple</i> , there was with us [a man] named Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah.
w'b'z t't k'wd'y hmyrp't	He always walked in obedience of God.
wdr my'n m' nyz mrdwm'ny š'nd bwdnd ky t't k'wd'y rh' mykrdnd wn'm k'wd'y nmytww'nstnd bwrnd	There were also among us some people who abandoned the obedience of God, and they could not bear the name of God
wnh 'šnydn	and not hear [the name of God]
wrwzwsb bk'rh' n' š'yyst mš'wl bwdnd	and day and night they were busy with unworthy deeds,
wbwt prsty wznwt wtb"hy bk'wwd my krdnd	and they made upon themselves idolatry, <i>whoredom</i> , and corruption.

³⁴ All Aramaic. In the following, the *italized* words are those in Hebrew or Aramaic.

³⁵ Dan 1:3: “Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief officer, to bring some Israelites of royal descent and of the nobility.”

³⁶ Dan 1:1: “In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and laid siege to it.”

ps Ywy yt' šmw yrmyh b'š'n p'rst'd
btwbyk' krđn 'yš'n w'yš'n r' b'z t't
'b'wrđn

w'n wqt p'dš'h šdqyh bwd

wyrmyh b'yš'n hmy gwp't

ky [73r] k'wd'y hmy p'rm'yd ky b'z t't
grdyd

wgr nh dst dwšmn šwm' nbwkdñsr
qwwy kwnm wbp'rstm t' yrwšlm k'r'b
kwnm

wšwm' r' tb'h kwnd

wš'wn yrmyh 'yn nbwwt krd pyš mlyk³⁷
šdqyhw

mlyk gwp't

by rwwyd wyrmyh hrš'y k'w'hyd bryš
kwnyd

ps 'ng'h yrmyh by grp'tnd wbs'h
'p'gndnd wdr 'n š'h 'b nh bwd 'l lzn³⁸

wyrmyh r' dr lzn⁴⁰ by'by nyhst

ps k'šm k'd'y bsy'r bwd 'b'z 'yš'n
wnbwkdñsr by p'rmwd blškr

wbdr yrwšlm nšt

So *God, blessed be His name*, sent Jeremiah to them to rebuke them and to bring them back into [His] obedience.

At that time the king was Zedekiah.

And Jeremiah was saying to them

that God commands that you should turn to [His] obedience again,

and if not—I will strengthen the hand of your friend, Nebuchadnezzar; and I will send him to destroy Jerusalem

and he [Nebuchadnezzar] will destroy you.

3. And when Jeremiah prophesied thus before King Zedekiah,

the king said:

“Ye go and do to Jeremiah whatever you wish.”

So then they took Jeremiah and threw him into a pit. And in that pit was no water, but sticky mud³⁹

and Jeremiah was placed inside the sticky mud without water.

Then God's wrath became great toward them, and He sent Nebuchadnezzar with [his] army,

and he sat at the gate of Jerusalem.

³⁷ The Aramaic form specific for Parthian chancellery, frequent in Judeo-Persian.

³⁸ Read: *lzg'.

³⁹ Following Zotenberg: *eng*, and so Shapira after him.

⁴⁰ Read: *lzg'.

wnbwkdnsr k'wwd dr bg'd'd bnšt
wnbwzr'dn b' lškrš byrwšlm p'rst'd

'm' 'yš'n hmšw'wn'n dw mšwh r' dr dst
š'n bwd ky my krdnd

wdwšmn b'yš'n

[73v] t'p'r nmy y'p't

yky qrbn wyky mylh

whyš' mšwh dygr bg'y nmy 'b'wrdnd

w'yn qrbn hr rwzēy r' daram bznbyly
r' nh'dndy wb' b'rw brsn p'rw hštndy
blškrgh nbwkdnsr wbrh hmy k'rydnd
bswy qrbn

yk rwz kwdky yš'r'l 'br b'rw yrwšlm bwd
wpwrsydnd 'zwy ky

'yn brh ky šwm' hmy k'wryd 'z 'ym' š'y
b'yš my kwnyd

kwdk r' gwp't ky

qrbn hmy kwnym

And Nebuchadnezzar himself was
sitting in Baghdad, and he sent Nebu-
zaradan⁴¹ with his army to Jerusalem.⁴²

4. But they [the Judahites] had two
mitzvahs in their hands that they were
performing anyway

so that no enemy would

gain victory over them:

One—sacrifice, and the other—circum-
cision,

and they did not fulfill any other *mitz-
vah*.

And every day they would put a *dram*⁴³
in a basket for this sacrifice and they
would take it down from the wall on a
rope to Nebuchadnezzar's camp and
they would buy a lamb for the sacrifice.

One day there was an Israelite boy on
the wall of Jerusalem, and they asked
him:

“This lamb that you are buying from us,
what are you doing with it?”

The boy said [to them]:

“We keep⁴⁴ offering the sacrifice.”

⁴¹ Nabû-zēr-iddina, “let Nabû give seed!” *rab nuḥatimmê*, “chief baker,” mentioned in 2 Kings 25:9ff. and Jer 52:30.

⁴² The whole passage appears to be an abridged paraphrase.

⁴³ Stands for silver *dirham* (from Greek golden Drachma, Hebrew *darkemon*, *darik*); note the same phonetics as in Armenian *dram*.

⁴⁴ *hmy* ...

wnbwzr'dn 'ndr k'nh k'wd'y k'wg kwšt	And Nebuzaradan killed a swine in the House of God.
wnbwkdnšr k'wwd dr yrwšlm nh 'mdh bwd dr rblh nšsth bwd	And Nebuchadnezzar himself did not come to Jerusalem; he stayed in Riblah, ⁴⁸
wnbwzr'dn byrwšlm p'rst'd 'yn k'rh' krd	and he sent Nebuzaradan ⁴⁹ to Jerusalem to carry out these deeds.
wb'd 'z'n dr 'st'n k'nh k'wd'y k'wn byg'wšyd	5. And after that blood boiled on the threshold of God's House. ⁵⁰
wnbwz'rdn tm'm mhtr'n wpyr'n wyr-myh r' by k'nd wpwrsyd 'z 'yš'n ky 'yn š'ay k'wnēy hst ky my g'wšd	Nebuzaradan called all the dignitaries, the elders, and Jeremiah and asked them: "What is this well of boiling blood?"
g'w'b d'dnd ky k'wn g'w wgwspnd ky qrbn krdndy pyš ywy w'knwn nmy kwnnd	They said to him: "The blood of the cattle and the sheep that they sacrificed before God, and now they don't sacrifice."
nbwzr'dn p'rmwd t' g'w'n	Nebuzaradan ordered cattle
[74v] wgwspnd'n bsy'r by 'bwrndnd wbrsr 'n k'wn kwštnd w'n k'wn g'wš b'z nh nh'd wg'wš zy'd myšwd	Nebuzaradan ordered to bring many cattle and sheep and slaughter them over this blood, but the blood did not stop boiling and the boiling even increased.
nbwzr'dn gwp't ky	And Nebuzaradan said:
'yn nh k'wn g'w wgwspnd hst w'gr r'st nh gwydyd hmht'n bykwšm	"This is not the blood of cattle and sheep, and if you don't tell me the truth, I will kill you all."

⁴⁸ Cf. 2 Kings 25:6–7, 18–21 (compare with Jeremiah 39:5–7; 52:9–11, 26–27).

⁴⁹ The non-Persian syntax follows the Aramaic (not Hebrew) *Vorlage*.

⁵⁰ Boiling blood: *b Sanh.* 96b; *b Gittin* 57b; *Eichah Rabbah* 82 5; etc.; see Richard Kalmin, "Zechariah and the Bubbling Blood: An Ancient Tradition in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Literature," in *Migrating Tales: The Talmud's Narratives and Their Historical Context*, by Richard Kalmin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 130–163.

ps g'w'b d'd gdlyh bn 'yqm ky š'y gwym
'y 'myr dr k'r k'wwd šrms'r hstym

mrđy bwd nby' k'wd'y wn'mš zkryh
bwd wkhn bwd w'n rwz ky 'wyr'
kwštnd rwz kpwr bwd ky twbyk' 'ym'
my krd 'wyr' kwštnd w'yn k'wn 'wy hst
ky pyš tw gylh my kwnd

w'n s't nbwzr'dn k'sm grp't why
p'rmwd t' by 'bwrndnd sh hz'r ħkmym
wbr sr 'n k'wn kwštnd wg'wš b'z nh
nyh'd

wdygr khnym G hz'r kwštnd wk'wn
g'wš b'z nh nšst

dygr [75r] lwy'n dw hz'r 'bwrndnd
wkwštnd wk'wn b'z nh nšst

dygr B hz'r ħtnym 'b'wrndnd wkallāt'n
nyz kwštnd wg'wš b'z nh nšst

dygr B hz'r kwdk'n 'z pyš mw'lm wbspr
twrh pyš'yndnd wdr 'tš 'p'gndnd whm b'z
nh nšst

6. Then Gedaliah, son of Ahikam,
answered: “What can I say, O ruler! We
are ashamed in our own deed!

There was a man, a *prophet* of God, and
his name was Zechariah⁵¹ and he was a
priest, and the day they killed him was
the Day of *Atonement*, and he reproved
us, and they killed him, and this blood is
his, that complains⁵² before you.”

then Nebuzaradan got angry and
ordered that they bring three thousand
sages and they killed [them] over this,
but the boiling did not stop.

They killed three thousand more *priests*
and the blood did not stop.

They also brought two thousand Levites
and they killed them, and the blood did
not stop.

They also brought two thousand grooms
and *brides*⁵³ and they killed them; the
boiling did not stop.

Another two thousand children [were
taken] from their teacher; they wrapped
them with a *Torah-Scroll* and threw
[them] into the fire, and even then [the
blood] did not stop.

51 2 Chr 24:20–22.; this is a reworking of the Second Targum of Esther 1:2; cf. *b. Gittin* 57b.

52 Standard Persian *golak*; Zotenberg: *bezeugt*, the old Hebrew translation אשר יענה בנו, and these are wrong. Cf. Shaked, Legal and Administrative Terms, 211 n. 48, quoting QD and referring to Zotenberg's reading as “not recognized by the editor”.

53 *kallāt* + Persian Plural suffix *ān*.

'n zm'n dwšmn dr šp'qt 'md gwp't 'y
zkryh k'w'hy ky g'wmlh yšr'l'n 'z 'lm
nyst šwwnd whnwz 'n k'wn p'rw nh
nšt

wmn dny'l dr mw'lm k'nh bwdm

w'md sy'f ky 'ym' by kwšd wHQBH d'd
'ym' r' bk'wby bnt'r 'wy wmn hnnyh
wmyš'l w'zryh nh kwštnd 'm' bbrdh
bwrnd

dygr yšr'l'n zn'n wkwdk'n w'l'th' byt
hmqdš wkwrsy syyd šlmh 'H wg'mh'
khnym hmh by bwrnd

[75v] bbg'd'd bk'zynh k'wwd p'rst'nd

wtk't šlmh k'w'st ky 'wy bryš nšynd

w'n tk't bwzšt krdh bwd šlmh 'H

p'hyš hr yky 'br dygr gwnh bwd yky g'w
bwd wyky symwrg' wyky šyr wyky bny
'dm

Then the enemy had mercy and said: "O
Zechariah, do you want that all the Isra-
elites should be annihilated from this
world?" The blood still didn't disappear.

7. And I, Daniel, was at the House of the
Teacher⁵⁴

and a sword-bearer came to kill us. And
the Holy One, blessed be He, gave our
grace in his eyes, and they did not kill
me and Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,
but took [us] captive.

And other Israelites, women and chil-
dren, and the vessels of *the Temple* and
the throne of the Lord⁵⁵ Solomon, *peace
be upon him*, and the vestments of the
priests, all of them they took

to Baghdad and they sent to their trea-
suries.

And he himself wanted to sit on the
throne of Solomon.

And Solomon, *peace be upon him*, made
this throne in *bwzšt*.⁵⁶

Each of its legs was different from its
companion: one was an ox, one was an
eagle,⁵⁷ one was a lion, and one was a
human.

⁵⁴ Possibly, from **beyt sāphrā* instead of **beyt siphra*.

⁵⁵ The use of Arabo-Persian *sayyid* here is somehow like the use of Aramaic, Christian and Jewish, *mār*.

⁵⁶ The word meaning "ivory" is expected, see 1 Kings 10:22 and 2 Chr 9:19, and so translated Zoten-berg. The Judeo-Persian word is probably connected to *pwz*, "trunk, snout, proboscis." In the (modern) dialect of Lār (wherefrom the MS came) *pūz* is used instead of *binī* (nose). Cf. also differ-ently MacKenzie, An early Jewish-Persian argument, 251.

⁵⁷ The Judeo-Persian word for 'eagle' is the word for a mythological flying creature. See J.P. Asmussen, "*Šimurḡ* in Judeo-Persian Bible Translation," *Acta Iranica* 30 (1990): 7–13. The word also appears thus in the Judeo-Tai/ Juhuri liturgy.

šyr mwq'bl g'w wg'w mwq'bl symwrg' wsymwrg' mwq'bl bny 'dm krdh bwdnd	They made the lion in front of the ox, and the ox in front of the eagle, and the eagle in front of [the form of] the human, ⁵⁸
w'wy k'w'st ky brwy kwrsy rwwd why 'wp'tyd ws'q p'y r'st bškst	and he [Nebuchadnezzar] wanted to ascend the throne, and he fell and broke the shin of his right leg. ⁵⁹
wby lrzyd sk't why d'nst ky gwn'h k'r bwd dr pyš ywy	And he trembled greatly and knew that he was a sinner before God.
wps mn dny'l r' k'nd wgwpt 'y dny'l mn r' h'l qyṣh ṣ'wnyn 'wp'tyd	8. Then he called me—I am Daniel—and said: “O Daniel! Such a story ⁶⁰ has hap- pened to me.
b'yd ky tw pyš k'wd'y ḥ'g't k'w'hy t' p'y mn dwrwst šwwd wb'z tw wrpyq'nt nykw kwnm	You need to beg before God so that my leg will be healed, and I will benefit you and your friends.”
wmn dny'l šlwt' krdm pyš	And I, Daniel, <i>prayed</i> ⁶¹ before
[76r] pyš ywy YT' ŠM' wh'g't k'w'stm bswy nbwkdṣr	<i>God, blessed be His name</i> , and I begged for Nebuchadnezzar. ⁶²
ps ywy ml'k' bprst'd wbm̄n gwp't ky 'y dny'l dwst mn ṣ'y ḥ'g't k'w'hy rww' hst ḥ'g't tw	Then God sent an <i>angel</i> to me: “O Daniel, my beloved, what is your request? Your request is accepted!”

⁵⁸ See the lengthy description of the throne in the Second Targum to Esther 1:2; only a short sentence corresponds here.

⁵⁹ Taken from the story of Pharaoh Necho, also in the Second Targum to Esther 1:2.

⁶⁰ The Arabic word *qyṣh/ qṣh/ qīṣṣah*, ‘story,’ used also in the title of this Judeo-Persian composition, can, in fact, be a re-interpretation of Aramaic *qēṣā/ qīṣā*, ‘end/ eschatological story/ apocalypse.’ See Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 27, n. 67.

⁶¹ Aramaic; the use of this word for prayer is common in Judeo-Persian, one of the cases when a Hebrew/Aramaic word used in Judeo-Persian translates another Hebrew words (as is the case in many Jewish languages).

⁶² Cf. Zerubbabel 5.

wrwy dr 'wp'tydm pyš ml'k' ywy wh'g't
k'w'stm bswy nbwkdñr wgwpt'm

by b'yd ky 'yn rš' mwd'w't kwny ws'q p'y
'wy dwrwst šwwd

wgwpt'ywy 'y dny'l hm 'kwn by rww
ky 'yn rš' p'yš dwrwst šwd

wš'wn ky p'yš dwrwst šwd nyky bsy'r
krd 'b'z mn wrp'yq'n mn

wmlk p'rmwd ky hr ky 'yš'n bynd
k's'mtš'n kwnd bswy dlmn

wš'wn s'lh' bsy'r gwdšt nbwkdñr šnmy
zryn by krd wp'rm'n d'd ky hr ky p'dš'h
dwst d'rd b'yn šnm swg'wd kwnd

wmn dny'l [w']

[76v] rpyq'n swg'wd nh krdym šnm
r' w'ng'h mrdwm'n pyš mlk g'wm'zy
krdnd wgwpt'nd

'y mlyk bg'wyd by zyħ'd 'yn g'y mrd-
wmy š'nd p'rm'n tw qbwł nmy kwnnd
wšnm r' swg'wd nmy kwnnd

And I fell on [my] face before the *angel*
of God and begged for Nebuchadnezzar,
and I said:

“It must⁶³ be that you heal this *wicked-*
one and [it is fitting that] the shin of his
leg be healed.”

9. The Lord said: “O Daniel, go immedi-
ately, because this wicked-one, his leg
has been healed.”

And when his leg was healed, he benefit-
ted me and my friends greatly.

And the king commanded that whoever
sees them serve them for me.

10. And when many years had passed,
Nebuchadnezzar made an idol of gold,
and ordered that everyone who loves
the king,⁶⁴ should prostrate to this idol.

And I, Daniel, and

my friends, we did not prostrate to the
idol, then people denounced [us] before
the king and said:

“O king, may you live forever!⁶⁵ There
are a number of people here who do not
heed your commands and who do not
prostrate to the idol.”

⁶³ In the Persian *by b'yd*, *by* may be the untranslated Hebrew *bī*, “please.”

⁶⁴ *k[w]l 'nš *drhm* mlk'.

⁶⁵ Translated from the Aramaic formula *mlk' l'myn hyy* used in Dan 2:4 (where the Judeo-Persian translation has the same as here in QD), and not from the real Iranian *anōšag bawēd*.

wmn dny'l bšnydm 'yn swk'wn wyk
k"nh by s'k'tm mwq'bl byt hmqdš whr
rwz mn dny'l wḥnnyh wmyš'l w'zryh
šlwt' hmy krdym

wmlyk b'ym' k'šm grp't

by p'rmwd t' tnwry t'p'tnd wḥnnyh
myš'l w'zryh hr sh pyš mn 'wwryd

wp'rmwd ky 'yš'n dr tnwr 'nd'zyd

wdr tnwr š'n 'nd'k'tnd

wYWY YT' ŠM' ml'k bp'rst'd t' 'yš'n 'zyn
'tš nygh d'št whyš' gznd b'yš'n nh rsyd

nbwk'dnšr š'wn 'yn

dxd [77r] dxd p'rmwd t' 'yš'n byrwn
'mdnd 'z tnwr

t' 'n ḥd ky nbwk'dnšr rwy dr 'wp'tyd
wšbh gwp't pyš škynh

dygr b'd 'z mwdty š'nd nbwk'dnšr by
mwrđ wblš'šr pwsrš b'z g'y nšt wp'dš'hy
by krd

wdygr 'wy p'rmwd t' byrwn 'bwrđnd
't'ḥ' wg"mh' qdš ky d'wt hmy krd
wk'w'st myy hmy k'wwrd

And I, Daniel, heard this thing and built
one house directed towards the Temple
and every day I, Daniel, and Hananiah,
Mishael, and Azariah, we would *pray*⁶⁶
[there].

And the king was wrathful with us.

Then he ordered that they should light a
furnace and “ye bring before me Hana-
niah, Mishael, and Azariah, all three of
them,”

and he ordered, “ye throw them into the
furnace!”

and they threw them into the furnace.

And *God, blessed be His name*, sent an
angel to protect them from this fire and
no harm came to them.

And Nebuchadnezzar, when he saw this,
he ordered that they should take them
out of the furnace,

until Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face
and gave *praise* before the *Shekhinah*.

11. And after a while Nebuchadnezzar
died and Belshazzar his son sat in his
place and exercised kingship,

and further he ordered that they should
take out the vessels and the vestments
of *holiness* because he had made a feast,
and he wanted that they could drink
wine.

66 Aramaic.

wg'mh' qdš by pwšyd wby nyšt
blš'šr wndym'nš wḥ'g'yb'nš myy ky
k'wwrdnd b'l'th' qdš

ps YWY YT' ŠM' ml'k by p'rst'd t' 'n g'y
ky 'yš'n šsth bwdnd dsty 'z dyw'r byrwn
'md wdryš nbšth bwd ky

'y mlyk bdyn ky krđy p'dš'hy 'z tw rp't

mlyk š'wn 'n dst wnbšth dyd by trsyd

[77v] gwp't t' g'wmlh s'ḥr'n wk'rdmnd'n
'b'wrndnd whyš' ks nh tww'nst k'ndn

wm'dr mlyk gwp't ky

'yn g'y šk'sy hst 'z yhwdy'n 'wy k't k'ndn
d'nd wtp'syrš r' my gwyd

wmn dny'l tlbzydnd wgwpt'nd ky 'yn k't
by k'n wtp'syrš m'lwm grd'n ky š'yst

wmn dny'l š'wn 'yn nbšth dydm gwp'tm
'y mlyk bg'wyd zyḥy mn 'yn nh k'nm ky
mr' by kwšy

mlyk gwp't mn twr' nh kwšm by gwy
'yn š'yst

And he put on the vestments of *holiness*
and sat, Belshazzar, his drinking-com-
panions, and his gatekeepers,⁶⁷ and they
drank wine from the vessels of *holiness*.

Then *God, blessed be His name*, sent an
angel so that [at] the place they were sit-
ting, a hand would come out of the wall
and on it was written, saying that

“O king, in this (thing) that you have
done, (your) kingdom has departed from
you!”

The king, as he saw this hand and this
writing, became afraid

(and) said that they should bring all the
witch-doctors and wise men, but no man
could read [it].

And the king's mother said that

“There is a man among the Jews in this
place, he knows how to read the inscrip-
tion and he will tell its inner meaning.”

And they requested me—I, Daniel—and
said “Read this inscription and interpret
its inner meaning; what is it?”

12. And I, Daniel, when I saw this
inscription, I said “O king, live forever!
I will not read this, because you will kill
me.”

The king said: “I will not kill you! Say
what is this?!”

⁶⁷ On this word, *ḥājib*, see Shaul Shaked, “Two Judaeo-Iranian Contributions ...,” in *Studies Relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture Throughout the Ages*, ed. Shaul Shaked (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 1982), 292–322.

wmn dny'l gwp'tm ky 'z g'yh't 'n
bdyd'r 'md ky tw b' g'mh' w'l'th' qdš
wmyy k'wwrdy p'dš'hy 'z tw z'hyl šwd
wbdwšmn tw d'dh 'md

hm dr 'n rwz blšr bqtl 'md wmn dny'l
by gwryk'tm wbšwštr šwdm nzd

kwrš [78r] š'wn kwrš mr' dyd k'wrm
šwd wmr' pwršyd ky 'y dny'l 'z kwg'y
my 'yy

g'w'b d'dm ky 'z bg'd'd my 'yym ky
nbwkdñr 'ym'r' bbrdh bybwrd

ps kwrš gwp't ky pdr'n 'yš'n š'y gwn'h
krdh bwdnd ky YWY YT' ŠM' bdst
nbwkdñr swpwrđ š'n

g'w'bš d'dm ky gwn'h k'r šwdnd
wnby'n kwšnd wp'rm'n k'wd'y bg'y nh
'bwrdnd wbd k'ry krnd t' 'n hđ ky YWY
'yš'n r' bdst dwšmn swpwrđ

wgwp't bmn kwrš 'y dny'l b'yd ky šlwt'
kny dr qblh k'wd'y t' mlyk mwwšyl bdst
mn swp'rd wmn by rwwm w'l'th' qdš
byrwšlm 'wwrm

And I, Daniel, said: "It was revealed that you were [clothed] in the vestments [of holiness] and that you drank wine from the vessels of *holiness*, [the] kingdom will pass from you and be given to your enemy."

On the same day Belshazzar was murdered, and I, Daniel, ran away and went to Shushtar⁶⁸ to Cyrus.⁶⁹

Cyrus. When Cyrus saw me, he glad-denied and asked me: "O Daniel, where do you come from?"

I answered: "I come from Baghdad because Nebuchadnezzar exiled us."

Then Cyrus said: "What sin did your fathers sin⁷⁰ for which *God, blessed be His name*, had delivered them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar?"

I answered him: "They were sinners and killed *prophets* and did not fulfill God's commandments and did evil until God delivered them into the hands of the enemy."

And Cyrus said to me: "O Daniel, you need to say a *prayer*⁷¹ before (*qiblah*) God that he will deliver the King of Mosul⁷² into my hands and I will go and bring the vessels of *holiness* to Jerusalem."

⁶⁸ Stands for Shushan/Susa.

⁶⁹ Daniel 1:21: "Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus."

⁷⁰ Literally, "their fathers," a civilized usage.

⁷¹ Aramaic.

⁷² Stands for Assyria.

wmn dny'l šlwt' krdm wgwpt'm 'y YWY
y'ry bkwrš by dh

[78v] t' by rwwd wmylyk mwwšyl
by kwšd w'n 'l'th' wg'mh' qdš hmh
byrwšlm 'wword

gwp't YWY ky 'y dny'l šlwt' tw
pdyrwp'tm 'nš' šlwt' krđy 'z bhr kwrš

'knwn byrww wbygwy bkwrš t' bbg'd'd
rwwd wbygyrd wmylyk mwwšyl r' hr š'y
k'w'hd bryš kwnd w'n g'mh' w'l'th' qdš
b'z 'wword

wmn dny'l bkwrš gwp'tm ky byrww dr
bbl ky YWY mlyk bdst tw swp'rd

wbr k'st kwrš wD' hz'r mrd 'b'z k'wyš
grp't wbb'l rp't wby krd k'rz'r 'b'z mlyk
mwwšyl wby kwšt 'wyr' w' lškr

whmh g'mh' w'l'th' qdš zryn wsymyn
wkwršy šlmh 'H by'bword dr šwštr
w'ng'y by nyh'd š'wn ky

nbšth [79r] hst

wkwrš p'rmwd t' 'n 'l'th' wg'mh' qdš dr
byt hmqdš bwordnd

And I, Daniel, *prayed*⁷³ and said: “O God,
help Cyrus

to go and kill the King of Mosul, and
bring the vessels and the vestments of
holiness, all (of them) to Jerusalem.”

God said: “Daniel, I have received your
*prayer*⁷⁴ that you *prayed*⁷⁵ for Cyrus.

Now go and tell Cyrus to go and conquer
Baghdad, and whatever he wants to do
to the king of Mosul and restore these
vestments and vessels of *holiness*.”

And I, Daniel, said to Cyrus that “Go to
Babylon, because God will hand over the
king into your hand.”

And Cyrus got up, took 4 thousand men
with him, went to Babylon, waged war
with the King of Mosul, and killed him
and [his] army.

And all the vessels and vestments of
holiness of gold and silver, and the
throne of Solomon, *peace be upon him*,
were brought to Shushtar and placed
there,

as it is written.

13. And Cyrus commanded that these
vessels and vestments of *holiness* be
brought to *the Temple*

73 Aramaic.

74 Aramaic.

75 Aramaic.

wtk't šlmh bswy k'wyštn rh' krd wkwřš bryš nyšst	and Solomon's throne he left to himself, ⁷⁶ and Cyrus sat on it
gwp't YWY bmn 'y dny'l š'wnyn gwy bhmh šhrh' by br k'zyd t' byt hmqdš 'b'd'n b'z kwnym 'knwn " s'l by bwd	God said to me: "O Daniel, say this to all the nations: 'Arise ye and rebuild <i>the Temple</i> , for now seventy years [are completed]."
'y dny'l kwrš r' by gwy ky YWY YT' ŠM' my p'rm'yd ky by rww wbyť hmqdš 'b'd'n b'z kwn w'zr' hswpr zrwbbł br š'lyl b'z kwrš by br	O Daniel, tell Cyrus that <i>God, blessed be His name</i> , commanded: 'Go and rebuild <i>the Temple</i> ! And with Cyrus take also <i>Ezra the Scribe</i> and <i>Zerubbabel son⁷⁷ of Shealtiel</i> ."
w'nš'y k'wd'y p'rmwd dny'l bkwrš gwp't	And Daniel told Cyrus what God had commanded.
w'n 'b'd'ny nh š'wnyn bwd ky 'n pšyn	And this (renovated) building was not like the previous one.
k'r yšr'l'n wšbṭhy wnym 'b'z šwdnd	The army of the Israelites and a <i>tribe</i> ⁷⁸ and half a tribe went together.
ps 'zr' 'H by šwd bhmh šhrh' wgwpt br k'zyd wb'z	Then <i>Ezra, peace be upon him</i> , went to all the countries, and said: "Arise ye and return to
[79v] byť hmqdš rwwyd ky 'bd'n b'z krđym	<i>the Temple</i> , for we will rebuild it and renew it!"

⁷⁶ SyrD 8 concludes: "Only the golden throne on which King Solomon used to sit did the king spare and kept it in the treasury." The rest of QD's narrative does not appear in SyrD, which continues: "In the middle of the night Gemath the Magus rose, killed King Cyrus." According to Darius the Great's (522–486 BCE) Bisitun inscription, Cambyses II (530–522 BCE), son of Cyrus II the Great (559–530 BCE), killed his brother Bardiya / Smerdis just before leaving for Egypt. In March of 522 BCE, while Cambyses was still in Egypt, a magus by the name of Gaumata, according to Darius's inscription, organized a rebellion to gain control of the Achaemenid Empire, pretending to be Bardiya. This episode is also recorded by Herodotus (3:61–87) who, in turn, relied on Darius's Bisitun inscriptions. See J.M. Balcer, *Herodotus and Bisitun: Problems in Ancient Persian Historiography* (Historia: Einzelschriften 49; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1987), 49–69; R. Schmitt, *Epigraphisch-exegetische Noten zu Dareios' Bisutun-Inschriften* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990).

⁷⁷ Aramaic.

⁷⁸ Aramaic with non-Aramaic spelling of the definite article.

wyšr'l'n nh šwdnd pnd'štnđ ky 'zr'
dwrwg' my gwyd k'w'stnđ ky 'zr' by
kwštnđ

ps 'zr' by d'nst wby gwryk't
wšlwt' +krd+ +dr ḥt'rt k'wd'y t' HQBH
šlwt'+ 'wy qbwł krd w'wyr' nyh'n krd

wyšr'l'n yk šbṭh wnym b'z byt hmqdš
šwdnd wqrbn bwrđnd wšk'ynh qbwł
p'rmwd w'yš'n r' brk'h krd

b'id 'z yk s'l drywš 'md wb'z kwrš k'rz'r
krd wkwrš bškst wp'dš'hy by grp't
wbg'y kwrš nšst š'wn kwrš by kwšt

wmn dny'l š'wn ḥ'l š'wnyn dydm
btrsydm 'z drywš wgwryk'tm

wbzmy'n p'rs šwdm bkwh ky 'br kn'r
rwd ḥw'z hst

w'n g'y pl's 'ndr pwšydm wdrmy'n
k"kstr nšstm

[80r] nšstm wšlwt' krdm pyš YWY YT'
ŠM' š'wnyn gwp'tm ky

'y YWY t' kyy 'yn šrh wšwqh br mn 'yyd

But the Israelites did not go; they
believed that Ezra was speaking false-
hood; they wanted to kill Ezra.

And Ezra knew it and ran away, and he
*prayed*⁷⁹ before God so that *the Holy*
One, blessed be He, will hear his *prayer*⁸⁰
and hide him.

And the Israelites, a *tribe*⁸¹ and a half,
returned to *the Temple* and brought a
sacrifice, and the *Shekhinah* accepted
[their request] and *blessed* them.

After a year Darius came and made war
with Cyrus and defeated Cyrus and cap-
tured the kingdom; and he sat instead of
Cyrus, as he had Cyrus killed.⁸²

14. And I, Daniel, when I saw the deed as
it was so, I was afraid of Darius and fled

and went to the land of Persia to the
mountain that is on the bank of the
river Aḥwāz,

and there I put on sackcloth and sat in
the dust

and *prayed*⁸³ before *God, blessed be His*
Name, and I said that

“O God, how long will be upon me this
trouble and distress?”

⁷⁹ Aramaic.

⁸⁰ Aramaic.

⁸¹ Aramaic with non-Aramaic spelling of the definite article.

⁸² This strange tradition combines the war of Cyrus the Old against King Astyages of Media with the story of the death of Cyrus the Great by the Scythians. Such a tradition is not known to me in Jewish sources.

⁸³ Aramaic.

pdr'n mn by mwrndnd whyt hmqdš
wyr'n by bwd wbrwzyg'r mn

khn wlwy wnb'y' by kwšnd

wmn dny'l dr pyš YWY YT' ŠM' T"W
rwz n'n nh k'wwrdm w'b nh tng'ydm
šb wrwz bgryh wšwwn mšg'wl bwdm
wD' rwz 'br zmyn nšstm g'wd 'z'n ky
bp'y'y'stdm

t' šlwt' mn by pdyrwp't wml'k p'rst'd

wgwp't 'y dny'l š'y'r gryh wz'ry hwmy
kwny

gwpt'm 'z'n ky 'z mlyk drywš my trsm

gwpt' mh trs ky mn twr' bdst 'wy nh
sp'rm

wb'd š'nd rwzh' drywš mr' tlb krd
wnzh'r n'mh nbšt

[80v] w'yn bwd 'ndr znhr' n'mh ky

br k'yz 'y dny'l wby'yy nzdyk mn wmh
trs ky hmš'wn'n ky kwrš nyky krd 'b'z
tw mn byštr kwnm

wš'wn n'mh k'ndm šwdm dr šwštr
b'wšt'b wš'wn mr' dyd k'wrm šwd
wgwp't

'y dny'l š'y bwdt mgr 'b'z tw nyky nh
tww'nm krnd š'wn'n ky kwrš my krd

My ancestors died and *the Temple* was
destroyed, and in my days, they mur-
dered

a *priest*, a Levite, and a *prophet*."

And I, Daniel, before *God*, *blessed be His
name*, for *fifteen* days I did not eat bread
and I did not drink water, because I was
crying and mourning day and night, and
I sat for four days on the earth except
when I stood on my feet [while praying].

until He accepted my *prayer*⁸⁴ and sent
an *angel*

and he said: "O Daniel, why are you cry-
ing and screaming?"

I said: "For I am afraid of King Darius."

He said: "Do not be afraid, because I will
not hand you over into his hand."

15. And after a number of days, Darius
asked for me and wrote me a writ of
protection

and it was [written] in the writ of pro-
tection thus:

"Get up, O Daniel, and come to me and
do not be afraid because as much as
Cyrus benefitted you, I will benefit you
even more."

And when I read the letter, I hurriedly
went to Shushtar, and he was glad when
he saw me and said:

"O Daniel, what was with you, can I not
benefit you as Cyrus did?"

⁸⁴ Aramaic.

gwp'tm 'y mlyk bg'wyd byzyhy

mn 'z 'n trsydm ky mr' g'wm'zy kwnnd
pyš tw

gwp't bmn mh trs by 'yy wbnšyn nzdyk
mn

wmn šwdm wbnšstm 'b'z 'wy lšlwm
š'nd rwzyg'r'n š'wn'n ky dr mqr' nbšth
hst wbyd'd mr' k'wd'y k'wby dr nt'r 'wy
wmn dwstr my d'št 'z hmh mhtr'n 'wy
wmdh

gwp'tm [81r] dr pyš k'wd'y wbnšstm 'br
mlyk

wš'wn p'rg' nšt drywš g'mh' qdš ʔlb
krd wnh y'p't

gwp'tnd 'wyr' mhtr'n wsrhng'n ky 'ym'
nmyd'nym

mr' k'nd mlyk wgwpt' bh'g't 'z tw tw
myd'ny kwg'y hst 'yn g'mh' r' mr'
bynwm'y

mn gwp'tm ky nmyd'nm

gwp't bh'g't 'z tw my k'h'm ky by gwyty'
mn twr' nyky bsy'r kwnm w'gr nh gwyty'
mn twr' 'wqwbt kwnm

wmn gwp'tm ky nmyd'nm

'ng'h mr' bznd'n krd wbnd br p'y mn
nyh'd wswd'ny hmy d'd mr'

ps mn dnyl šlwt' krdm pyš YWY
wgwpt'm b'r k'wd'wnd' t' kyy š'wnyn br
mn 'yyd by bwk'š'y mr' šlwt'

I said: "O king, live forever!

I was afraid that they would denounce
me before you."

He said to me: "Do not be afraid! Come
and sit by my side!"

And I went and sat with him *in peace*
according to the number of days written
in *Scripture* and God gave me grace in
his sight, and he loved me more than all
his ministers, and I praised

God and sat with the king.

16. And when Darius sat in safety, he
demanded the vestments of *holiness* and
did not find them,

and the elders of his kingdom and his
ministers said to him: "We do not know."

The king called me and said, "Please,
you know where these vestments are,
show me!"

I said: "I do not know."

He said: "Please, I want you to tell me
so I will benefit you greatly. And if you
don't tell, I will punish you."

And I said that "I do not know."

So they put me in the prison and put
shackles on my legs and put me in
stocks.

17. So I, Daniel, *prayed*⁸⁵ before God and
said: "O God, how long will it be upon
me like this? Have mercy on me!"

85 Aramaic.

[81v] mn qbwł kwn wby ryh'n mr' 'z dst
'yn rš' w'yn g'mh' qdš bdst 'yn rš' msp'r

Accept my *prayer*⁸⁶ and deliver me from
the hand of this *wicked-one*, and do not
give the vestments of holiness into the
hand of this *wicked-one*!”

ps k'wd'y šłwt' mn by pdyrwp't wml'k'
bp'rst'd wby zd bš'šm drywš wkwr by
krd mlyk r' gwp't

Then God accepted my *prayer*⁸⁷ and sent
an *angel* and struck Darius's eyes, and
made the king blind,⁸⁸ and said:

š'yr' bdy krđy bdny'l w'wyr' bznd'n krđy
bswy g'mh' qdš

“Why did you do evil to Daniel and put
him in prison because of the vestments
of *holiness*?”

gwp't mlyk drywš pyš k'wd'y gwn'h
k'rm wbd krđm by bwk's'y bmn w'yn
rwšn'yy š'šm b'z dh

King Darius said, “I am a sinner before
God, and I have done evil. Please have
mercy on me and restore the light of my
eyes!”

gwp't ml'k' k'wd'y bdrywš 'gr dny'l
nwm'z kwnd bsbb tw mn rwšn'yy tw
b'z dhm

The *angel* of God said to Darius: “If
Daniel prays to me for you, I will restore
your light [of your eyes].”

tlb dny'l krd wgwpt' b'z mn t' byt
hmqdš by 'yy w'z k'wd'y ḥ'g't k'w'h bsbb
mn t' mr' š'šm b'z dh

[The king] demanded Daniel and said:
“Come with me to *the Temple* and beg
God on my behalf to restore my eyes.”

mlyk bst'nd +b'z k'wyštn+ hz'r sw'r

The king took [with him] one thousand
horsemen

wmn dny'l by šwdym dr byt hmqdš
wš'wn dydm byt hmqdš gwp'tm

18. And I, Daniel, went to *the Temple*,
and when I saw *the Temple*, I said:

⁸⁶ Aramaic.

⁸⁷ Aramaic.

⁸⁸ Syr 11 (Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 74): “At that time God sent a heavenly angel who struck King Darius and took away the light of his eyes, and he became very afraid and was shaken. It was shown to him in a nocturnal vision that because of the evil thoughts he had had he should go and take the implements of the divine treasure. And it was shown to him in the vision that he should go to Jerusalem, go up to the House of the Lord and worship there, and there the light of his eyes would be given to him. The great King Darius sent and called for me that I should go with him to Jerusalem.”

[82r] t' kyy k'nh k'wd'y b'sd wyr'n
wys'r'l'n r' pr'gndh b'snd

w'ydw'n gwp't mr' ml'k' YWY

'n hng'm 'yn k'nh k'wd'y wyr'n bwdhst
t' 'n wqt ky tšwbh kwnnd wbyd'nnd ky
gwn'h k'r hnd pyš k'wd'y wdst 'z gwn'h
b'z d'rnd k'wd'y 'br 'ys'n bwk's'y d wby't
hmqdš 'bd'n w'kwnd

wmn pyš k'wd'y šbh gwp'tm wšlwt'
krdm bswy 'n rš'

š'sm b'z d'd

gwp't ml'k' YWY bmn

šlwt' tw by pdyrwp'tm

gwp't

By rww wdrywš bswy 'b by br w'b
brwy kwnd wš'wn 'b brwy kwnd š'smš
dwrwst šwwd k'wd'y rwn'y b'z dhd

'n b br š'sm krd

wš'smš dwrwst gšt bqwdrt
YWY <YT'> ŠM'

š'sm br d'st wk'wd'y r' mdh gwp't ky

b'p'ryn hst n'm k'wd'y

“How long will the House of God be desolate, and the Israelites be scattered?”

And this is what *God's angel* told me:

“This House of God will remain desolate until they *repent* and know that they are sinners before God and withdraw their hands from sin, God will have mercy on them and *the Temple* will be rebuilt.”

And I said *praise* to God and *prayed*⁸⁹ for this *wicked-one*,

that [God] would restore his eyes.

God's angel said to me,

“I have received your *prayer*.”⁹⁰

He said [further]:

“Go and bring Darius to the water and let him put [this] water on his face, and as he would put [this] water on his face, his eyes will be healed, God will restore the light of his eyes.”

[Darius] put [the] water on [his] eye[s]

and his eyes were healed by the might of *God*, <*blessed be*> *His name*.

19. (Darius) raised his eyes and praised God saying:

“Blessed is the name of God of

⁸⁹ Aramaic.

⁹⁰ Aramaic.

[82v] dny'l ky 'p'rydg'r 'sm'n wzmyn
'wy hst ky by hmt'y wby hmb'z hst w'wy
hst ky 'b'gndg'n r' w'p'r'z'nd wkwr'n
r' dwrwst kwnd wbrs'lt dny'l š'sm mn
dwrwst krd

wk'wd'y dr dlš nyh'd wdr k'zynh by
gwš'd wdihašn d'd br khnym wlwym
wytwmym wbm'n dny'l m'l bsy'r d'd

wb'z gšt dr šwštr wmr' b' k'wyštn bwrđ
wby šwdym lšlwm

wdr'n r'h' dydnd 'ym'r' mrdwm'n g'yh'n
ky 'n zm'n mlyk drywš kwr bwd

wps š'smš dwrwst dydnd

bsy'r ks'n 'br dst dny'l byšr'ly 'mdnd

wbšwštr šwdym wmlyk b'z sr p'dš'hy
k'wyš šwd

wmn dny'l pl's dr pwšydm wbk"k
nyšstm bsy'r rwzyg'r'n gwšt nh
k'wwrdm wmyy nh tng'ydm šb wrwz
bgryyh

mšg'wl [83r] bwdm wš'sm'n mn bs'n
š'smh 'b bwd bg'yht 'n ky k'nh k'wd'y
wyr'n bwd

Daniel, He is the Creator of the heavens
and the earth, who has no equal or
partner;⁹¹ and He is the one who will
raise the lowly and heal the blind. And
through Daniel's messengerhood, [God]
healed my eyes."

And God put it in his heart, and he
opened the gate of the storehouse and
gave gifts⁹² to the *priests* and *Levites* and
orphans and to me—I, Daniel—he gave
much property.

[Darius] returned to Shushtar, and
he took me with him, and we went in
peace.⁹³

And on the way [to Jerusalem] the
people of the world had seen us that at
that time King Darius was blind.

Then [on their return to Shushtar]
people saw his eyes which were healed,
and through Daniel, many came to the
Israelite ways.

And we went to Shushtar, and the king
resumed his reign.

And I, Daniel, wore sackcloth and sat
in the dust for many days; I did not eat
meat and I did not drink wine; day and
night I was occupied with weeping

and my eyes were like a fountain of
water because the House of God was
desolate.

⁹¹ In Muslim Persian, this term used to translate the Quranic *nadd* (Plural only, *andād*) and *šarik*.

⁹² Two words from the same root, the word for 'gift' was considered archaic and so it was partly vocalized; see also the Judeo-Persian translation of Prov 21:14.

⁹³ The Syr moves on to the apocalypics.

ps ywy ml'k' p'rst'd ky 'y dny'l š'y'r' hmy
gryy b'yn t'lk'y

wgwp't[ʔm]⁹⁴ 'z bhr byt hmqdš my
gryam ky wyr'n dydm wbrwzyg'z'r mn
khnym wlywm kwštnd w'yn hmh bdy
'mdhst wmy 'yyd bmn š'wn k'mwš b'šm

gwp't k'wd'y bmn ky 'y dny'l 'g'h b'š t' by
gwym twr' ky yšr'l'n š'y rsd š'n wp'rg'm
kyy rsd

wš'nd p'dš'h'n br sr 'y's'n mwsłt b'šnd
w'y's'n r' t' kyy dr glwt b'šnd

wk'l'šy š'n š'wn bwwd wnyky š'n bwwd

whr p'dš'hy 'br sr 'y's'n š'nd p'dš'hy kwnd

ml'k' by 'mwz'nyd mr' w'nyz b'z nmwd
hmh gwn'h'n yšr'l'n ky š'wn bwwd

'y dny'l by gwy

[83v] r' byšr'l'n ky k'wnwk šwm' ky
nygh d'štyd p'rm'n ywy

rwz wšb tšwbh kwnyd wšwm d'ryd
wšlw't' kwnyd pyš k'wd'y b'n wqt ky
k'wd'y p'rmwdhst rwz wšb k'wd'y t'lb
kwnyd w'ns'y mwr'd šk'y'nh hst

gwp't ywy 'y dny'l š'd b'š wšbh k'wd'y
bygwy wbygwy k'wnwk 'y yšr'l'n ky
nygh d'ryd p'rm'n k'wd'y

20. Then God sent an angel: "O Daniel,
why are you crying so bitterly?"

And I said: "I am crying because of *the Temple*, for I saw it desolate, and in my time they killed the *priests* and the Levites, and all this evil came, and it is [still] coming upon me; how can I be silent?"

God said to me thus: "O Daniel, know so that I will tell you what will happen to the Israelites, when the end will come,

and how many kings will rule over them, and how long they will be in *exile*,

and how their redemption and betterment will come about,

and how long each king will rule over them!"

[And all this] the *angel* taught me. He even showed all the sins of Israel, as they were.

"O Daniel, tell

the Israelites: 'Fortunate are you who have kept the Lord's commandments!

Do *penance* day and night, observe a *fast*, and *pray* before the Lord at the time the Lord has commanded; day and night seek the Lord, and do what the *Shekhinah*'s desire is!"

The Lord said: "O Daniel, rejoice and praise the Lord and say: 'Fortunate are you, Israel, that you keep the commandments of the Lord!'

'y dny'l by nmwdm ky hr 'wmaty wkyšy š'nd p'dš'h'n by b'snd wš'nd zm'n p'dš'h'ny kwnnd	21. O Daniel, I will show you how many kings there will be of each nation and faith, and how long their kingdom will endure,
mn twr' by 'g'h'nm ky š'wn bwwd	And how this will come about.
'y dny'l hm dr zm'n tw p'dš'h'ny rš' bwwd ky p'dš'hy kwnd s'l wby myrd	O ⁹⁵ Daniel, even in your time there will be an <i>evil</i> king who will rule for [one] ⁹⁶ year, and he will die.
ps 'z'n br k'yzd p'dš'hy k'wd'y n'sn's gwnh 'wy swrk' bwwd	After that, one king will arise who did not know God, his color will be red.
mrđwm'n bsy'r dšw'ry rsd wk't'b kwnd wmrđwm'n	Great suffering will befall people, and he will preach
r' [84r] mwty' k'wyš kwnd š'wn mwr'dš	and subjugate people as he wishes. ⁹⁷
wyky dygr by 'yyd 'z psš whmh mrđwm'n k'rdmnd'n b'snd	And another will come after him, and all the people will become wise.
w'b'z m'dr wk'w'hr k'wwd šwḥbt kwnnd 'p't'b brnd [w]nwm'z	And they will converse ⁹⁸ with their mothers and sisters and they will wor- ship ⁹⁹ the sun. ¹⁰⁰
wsl'mt brnd bg'yh'n dr rwzyg'r š'n	And they will bring peace to the world in their days,
w'b'z mrđwm'n nyky bsy'r kwnd	and [their king] will be very kind to people.

⁹⁵ Here begins the passage published by Darmesteter in Judeo-Persian transcription with a French translation. It is far from clear whether the description of the Arsacid-Sasanian period was part of the work underlying Menahem Ben-Sasson's text or not.

⁹⁶ The wording here is problematic and perhaps erroneous.

⁹⁷ Here Alexander the Great is perhaps depicted as a Byzantine Caesar (as was frequently done in Sasanian apocalyptic texts).

⁹⁸ A euphemism for sexual intercourse; the practice referred to is Zoroastrian.

⁹⁹ This is an error of the copyist; it should be read **w'p't'b nwm'z brnd*.

¹⁰⁰ According to Darmesteter, this refers to the Persian period. Iranians sometimes were perceived as Sun-worshippers.

k'rdmnd'n yšr'l 'b'z 'yš'n dwsty kwnnd
wš'yzh' 'mwznd wsk'wnh' k'wd'y
k'whnd 'z yšr'l'n

The sages of Israel will befriend them
and learn things [and they, the Irani-
ans] will ask the words of God from the
Israelites.¹⁰¹

wyšr'l'n dwrwd nh bwwd brwzyg'r 'yš'n
'b'z yk dygr br 'wp'tnd w kwššt kwn T'
s'l

22. And the Israelites will not have
peace in their days;¹⁰² people will fight
and kill each other for 400 years."

dygr b'r ml'k ywy gwp't bmn ky dygry
br k'yzd w'z k'wd'y nh trsd

And another time God's angel said to
me: "Another will arise and will not fear
God.

wmrdwm'n šwk' b'šnd wšrm 'z yk dygr
nh d'rnd wb' yk dygr by znh'r b'šnd

And men will be bold and will not have
shame before one another; and they will
have no confidence in one another.

k'w'r d'rnd p'rm'n k'wd'y wdwzdy
wḥr'm bsy'r b'šnd dynh' wkyšh' 'šk'rh
bwwd

They will keep low God's command-
ments and multiply the robbery and cor-
ruption of customs,¹⁰³ and in their days
religions and sects will appear.¹⁰⁴

[84v] brwzyg'r 'yš'n k'wn ryzšt wstm
bwwd

In their days there will be spilling of
blood and tyranny.

p'dš'hy rš' bwwd wk'wyštn r' bhšty k'nd
mrdwm'n dr pyš k'wyštn r' k'nd wbyk
b'r bškhnd wnh br k'yznd l'wlm

There will be an evil king and he
will call himself "that of Paradise / of
Immortal Soul"¹⁰⁵ and he will call people
before himself,¹⁰⁶ and they will break
down at once and will not stand up *for
ever.*"

¹⁰¹ This describes the Arsacid/ Parthian period.

¹⁰² This refers to the Sasanian period, 224–627/651 CE.

¹⁰³ This refers to the annihilation of the Mazdakites. Zotenberg read *hr'b*.

¹⁰⁴ Mani, Mazdak, etc., Christianity, and Judaism. A similar claim appears in ZWY 3:28.

¹⁰⁵ Husraw (Khosrow) I Anūšīrwān, r. 531–579 CE.

¹⁰⁶ A reference to the summoning of Mazdakite leaders to the presence of Husraw I and his inter-
ring them with their feet sticking up out of the ground, a rather well-known feat of this king, who
was called by Zoroastrian priests "that of Paradise/of Immortal Soul" for his suppression of the
Mazdakite 'heresy.'

wmn dny'l dydm ky brwzyg'r 'yš'n
p'dš'hy br k'yzd qadaš kwt'h bwwd
wgnhš swrk' bwwd k'w'sthš nh bwwd
wbnb'sth k'wd'y nygrš nh kwnd k'wyštn
r' nby' k'nd

w'br 'wštwr 'yyd wšwwd

w'wštwrb'n bwwd w'z tymn bwwd

mrdwm'n r' bṭ't k'wyš kwnd

yšr'l'n r' dwšw'ry bwwd 'z 'wy

'z yšr'l'n ks'ny ṭ't wkyš 'wy šwwnd

wtw 'y dny'l 'ndrz kwn yšr'l'n r' t' bṭ't
'wy nh rwwnd w'z twrh mšh nh grdnd
wdyn yšr'ly nygh d'rnd

w'n ky 'z 'yš'n

hst [85r] b'wštwr 'br 'z tymn 'yyd whmy
gwyd ky mn nby' hm

tw 'y dny'l by gwy 'yš'n r' ky hrgz nby' 'z
tymn nh br k'st wnh 'yyd

23. And I, Daniel, saw that in those
days a king would arise, and his stature
would be short, and his color would be
red, and he would have no possessions,
and he would not read in God's writ-
ings¹⁰⁷ and call himself a *prophet*.

And on top of a camel he will come and
go,

and he will be a camel-driver, and he
will be from *Yemen/the South*,

and he will submit human beings to his
obedience;

for the Israelites, there will be suffering
from him,

and some people from among the
Israelites will follow his obedience and
belief¹⁰⁸

“And you, O Daniel, please reprove the
Israelites, so that they do not follow his
obedience and do not retreat from the
*Torah of Moses*¹⁰⁹ and keep *the Israelite*
ways.¹¹⁰

And this is one of them

who will come and ascend from Yemen
on a camel and say: ‘I am a *prophet*,’

You, O Daniel, say to them that ‘a
prophet never arose from *Yemen/the*
South and he will not come,

¹⁰⁷ *ṭā'at* as an interpretation of 'islām'. This is a reference to Muhammad's alleged illiteracy.

¹⁰⁸ This refers to widespread Jewish conversion to Islam, especially in Yemen.

¹⁰⁹ Not **twrt mšh*, fully assimilated Hebrew.

¹¹⁰ Hebrew, from Old Persian.

w'yn ky 'wy gwyd dwrwg' wmwḥ'l gwyd	and that what he says, he speaks lie and vanity.'
'z 'yš'n mrdwm dwšw'ry rsd	And suffering will befall the people from their hand.
wp'dš'hy 'yš'n Y' s'l bwwd why myrd dr tymn	And their reign will be 11 years and the end will be their death in <i>Yemen/the South</i> .
wps 'zwy yky dygr br k'yzd qdaš bwlnd b'sd dyr'z ryš wmw'y sy'h	24. And after him another will rise, his stature will be tall, his beard long and his hair black.
hmh mrdwm'n bṭ't k'wyš k'nd wbw-zwrg bwwd YG s'l p'dš'hy kwnd why myrd	And he will summon all men to his obedience, and he will grow, 13 years he will reign, and he will die.
wps 'zwy yky dygr br k'yzd b'lyš kw't'h rwyāš zšt bwwd wmk'r b'sd	25. And after him another will arise; his stature will be low and his face ugly and he will be a deceiver. ¹¹¹
wmrdwm'n šwb bsy'r b'sd dr rwzyg'r 'wy wd'wy nbw'h kwnd	People will be in great turmoil in his days, and he will claim <i>prophecy</i> .
mrdwm'n pyš k'wwd k'nd wyšr'l'n dwšw'ry rsd Y s'l p'dš'hy kwnd why myrd	He will call people before him men and trouble will overtake the Israelites; 10 years he will reign, and he will die.
[85v] ps 'zwy dygry br k'yzd qdaš bwlnd bwwd k'rdmnd bwwd wk'wn k'w'r bwwd	After him there will arise another one, his stature is tall, he will be wise, and he will be bloodthirsty.
wk'rz'r kwnd w'z m'rb 'yyd whmh ʿlm bst'nd mrdwm'n dwšw'ry rsd	He will make wars and come from the <i>West</i> and he will capture the whole world ¹¹² and people will be afflicted by distress

¹¹¹ Omar (r. 634–644), the first *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, what is seen in our text as a pretension to prophethood (*mk'r* = *dj'l*). Perhaps *Fārūq*, a messianic title?

¹¹² Arabic.

t' bmrh' r'sd k'r'z'r kwnd k'wn ryzšt
kwnd p'dš'hy kwnd Y"B s'l whm 'wyr' dr
mrh' bqt'l 'yyd

until he reaches the *East*, he will make
wars, shed blood, reign 12 years and he
too will be killed in the *East*.

w'z ps 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd brwzyg'r'n
'wy qh't wny'z bwwd wdwšw'ry r'sd
bmr'dwm p'dš'hy kwnd Y"D s'l wT'W
rwz wby myrd

After him another will arise; famine and
scarcity will be in his days, and distress
will affect the people, he will reign
14 years and 15 days, and he will die.

ps 'zwy yky dygr br k'yzd mrdwm'n r'
sl'mty bwwd brwzyg'r'n 'wy wsrš p'r'k'
bwwd wzr wsym bsy'r bwwd wyšr'l'n r'
k'w'r bšd br sr 'wy p'dš'hy kwnd Y"B s'l
wH' m'h wby myrd

26. And after him there will be another
one, and for men there will be peace in
his days, and his head will be broad¹¹³
and silver and gold will abound, and
the Israelites will be humiliated because
of him. And he will reign 12 years and
5 months, and he will die.

wps 'zwy yky dygr br k'yzd wb'z g'yš
nšynd

27. After him another will arise, and he
will take his place again,

rš' [86r] bwwd w'z k'wd'y nh trsd
wqh't bwwd bmr'dwm'n r' sk'ty bwwd
wp'dš'hy kwnd YD s'l wH' m'h wby
myrd

he will be *wicked*, and he will not fear
God, and there will be famine and
hardship for people, and he will reign
14 years and 5 months, and he will die.

w'z ps 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd dw s'l 'šwb
bšd wby myrd

28. And after him another will arise, and
there will be turmoil for two years, and
he will die.

w'z ps 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd sl'mt bwwd
mrdwm'n r' wzr wsym bsy'r bwwd
wyšr'l'n r'hd bwwd p'dš'hy kwnd K"G s'l
wby myrd

29. And after him another will arise,
there will be peace for humans, and
there will be much silver and gold, and
the Israelites will have peace,¹¹⁴ and he
will reign for 23 years, and he will die.

113 Zotenberg: *stolz*.

114 **rāḥat*, suggested to me by Shaul Shaked, of blessed memory.

w'z ps 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd w'swb bsy'r
bwwd brwzyg'r'n 'wy qhṭ ww'b' dr 'wlm
b'sd p'dš'hy kwnd H s'l wG m'h wby
myrd

wps 'z 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd 'z mzh
wbr šwwd t' m'rb whmh g'y'h'n by
st'nd mrdwm'n r' nyk bwwd whmh 'lm
p'dš'hy kwnd Y s'l wH rwz wby myrd

wps 'z 'wy yky dygr br

[86v] k'yzd 'z bbl wsl'mt bwwd
bmrwm'n wyš'r'l'n nyk bwwd p'dš'hy
kwnd YG s'l wby myrd

b'd 'z 'wy dygry br k'yzd 'b'd'n kwnd
msg'dh' wmn'rh' wmrwm'n r' hr rwz H
b'r nwm'z kwnnd wd'wy nbwwt kwnd
wmrdwm'n bpyš k'wyš k'nd p'dš'hy
kwnd yk s'l wB' m'h wby myrd

w'z ps 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd k'rdmnd
bwwd grd kwnd zr wsym wmrwm r'
k'wrmy bwwd wsl'my bwwd bhmh 'lm
wyš'r'l'n r' nyk bwwd dr k'nh k'wyš by
myrd w'wy p'dš'hy kwnd G s'l wnym

30. After him another will arise, and there will be great commotion in his days, there will be famine and plague in the *world*, he will reign 5 years and 3 months and he will die.

31. After him, another will arise. He will come from the *East* to the *West* and ensnare the whole world. He will act benevolently toward people, and he will rule the whole world¹¹⁵ for 10 years and 5 days, and he will die.

32a. After him will arise another

from Babylon, and there will be peace among people. He will be benevolent to the Israelites. He will reign for 13 years, and he will die.

32b. Another will then arise. He will build mosques and their minarets,¹¹⁶ and people will worship 5 times each day. He will claim prophecy, and he will call people before him. He will reign for one year and 2 months, and he will die.

33a. After him another will arise, and he will be wise; silver and gold will accumulate, and people will have happiness, and there will be peace throughout the world.¹¹⁷ He will be benevolent to the Israelites, he will die in his [astrological] house/time,¹¹⁸ and he will reign for 3 and a half years.

¹¹⁵ Arabic.

¹¹⁶ The oldest minarets are from 836 and 851 CE.

¹¹⁷ Arabic.

¹¹⁸ Compare Georgian *khana*, “period, epoch,” from Persian.

wpwsrš bg"y nšynd k'rdmnd bwwd
k'wd'y šn's bwwd zr wšym pr'gndh
kwnd bmrđwmvn wbg'yh'n d'd w'dl
bwwd wsl'mty bwwd wyšr'l'n r' 'hš'ny
bwwd

bmzrḥ

šwwd [87r] w'n g"y by myrd wp'dš'hy
'wy Y s'l bwwd

wpwsrš bg"y nšynd wswwd'y wdyw'nh
bwwd wdrwyš wk'w'hd ky g'yh'n wyr'n
kwnd wp'dš'hy kwnd yk s'l wH m'h why
myrd

wpwsrš bg"y nšynd wstm kwnd why
kwšd mrdwm'n yšm'l wk'w'hd ky hmh
ksy bzyr p'rm'n k'wwd kwnd mrdwm'n
r' dwšw'ry rsd

w'z mzrḥ bm'rb šwwd wk'rz'r wk'wn
ryzšt kwnd nšst k'wwd dr bbl s'zd

wb'd 'z'n dr rwm šwwd w'b'z rwmy'n
k'rz'r kwnd w'šwb bwwd dr g'yh'n

mrdwm dwšw'ry bwwd w'z rwm b'z
grdd

wbmzrḥ šwwd w'n g"y k'rz'r kwnd
w'ng"y bnšynd

p'dš'hy kwnd KG s'l wdr mzrḥ by myrd

34a. And his son will succeed him [to the throne]. He will be wise and will know God. He will profligately spend silver and gold for people, and there will be justice and uprightness in the world. He will be inclined to kindness for the Israelites.

He will go to the East

and die there, and his reign will be 10 years.

34b. And his son will succeed him [to the throne]. He will be melancholic, insane, and ascetic, and he will want to destroy the world. He will reign for one year and 5 months, and he will die.

34c. And his son will succeed him [to the throne], and he will persecute and kill Ishmaelites. He will want to bring every man under his lordship. Misery will visit people,

and he will come from the East and the West to wage war and shed blood. He will reside in Babylon.

He will then go to Rome¹¹⁹ and battle the Romans, and for the people there will be tumult in the world.

There will be misery, and he will return from Rome

and go to the East. There he will wage wars and there he will reside.

He will reign for 23 years, and he will die in the East.

119 That is, Byzantium.

w'wyr' G pwsr bwwd yky bmrh' rwwd
wyky wbm'rb

[87v] wyky dr bbl

ykyr' t'nh d'rd

w'n ky dr bbl bwwd p'dš'hy nh kwnd

w'n ky bmrh' bwwd šwb bwwd
wbm'rb šwwd wm'rb 'z br'dr st'nd

wk'wn ryzšt bsy'r bwwd wby myrd

w'z ps 'wy yky dygr br k'yzd g'mh
swpyd p'rm'yd d'stn g'mh' sy'h 'z dwny'
br d'rd

wm'rb bst'nd w'swb bsy'r bwwd wk'wn
ryzšt bwwd

w'tzy'n bsy'r by kwšnd

wk'lq'n 'z šhrh' bšhrh' dygr rwwnd

wyšr'l'n r' dwšw'ry bwwd wp'dš'hy
kwnd K s'l wby myrd

wdygry br k'yzd hm 'z m'rb by 'yyd
wbmzrh' šwwd w'b'z 'hl mzh' k'rz'r
kwnd

He will have three sons: One will go to
the East, one to the West,

and one to Babylon.

There will not be a lone king.

34d. And the one who will be in Baby-
lon—shall not reign;

and the one who will be in the East¹²⁰—
there will be tumult; he will go to the
West,¹²¹ and he will conquer the West¹²²
from his brother.

There will be much bloodshed, and he
will die.

35. Then another will arise after
him. He will order the wearing of
white clothes,¹²³ he will remove black
clothes¹²⁴ from the world.

and he will conquer the West, and the
turmoil will be great. There will be
bloodshed,

and they will kill many Arabs,

and people will travel from city to city.

The Israelites will be persecuted, and he
will reign 20 years, and he will die.

36. Then another will arise. He too
will come from the *West* and go to the
East, and he will wage war against the
people¹²⁵ of the *East*.

120 Arabic.

121 Arabic.

122 Arabic.

123 This is a reference to the Fatimid rulers.

124 This refers to the Abbasids.

125 Or perhaps: 'the ruling family.'

wmrđwm'n r' sk'ty bwwd wby kwšd mhtr'n wsrng'n	People will face difficulties, and he will kill ministers and governors.
wb'd 'z'n k'rz'r kwnd bmlyk bbl	Then he will wage war against the king of Babylon.
w'b'z [88r] mlyk'n mg'rb k'rz'r kwnd wk'wn ryzšt bsy'r bwwd	He will fight the kings of the West, ¹²⁶ and there will be much bloodshed.
wg'mh' swpyd d'rnd bhmh g'yh'n dws'wry bwwd	They will wear white clothes; ¹²⁷ in all the world will be distress,
whmh 'n mrdwm'n br sr k'wyš p'dš'hy kwnnd wəla' wəla' bwwd	and all these people will rule capri- ciously. [The world] will be [divided into] districts.
ps mlyky 'z rwmy'n by'yyd g'mh' swrk' d'rd	37. Then will arise a king from among the Romans, dressed in red clothes. ¹²⁸
wby šwwd t' dmšq wk'rz'r kwnd	He will advance until Damascus and will wage wars.
wsrhg'n wmhtr'n wmlyk'n yšm'l by kwšd	And he will kill the great ones of Ishmael, their most honored, and their kings,
p'dš'hy 'z yšm'l'n by šwwd	and the kingship will pass from the Ishmaelites.
mn'rh' by knd msg'dh' wyr'n kwnd	He will destroy the mosques and smash their minarets,
whyš' ks nh bwwd ky n'm pswl by brd	and no one will ever again call in the name of the <i>disqualified one</i> . ¹²⁹
wby šknd mlkwt yšm'l wb'z nh k'yzd hrgz	He will eradicate the <i>kingdom of Ish- mael</i> ; it will never rise again.

126 Arabic.

127 Fatimids.

128 For a discussion of these passages, see ch. 4.1.2 in the main text.

129 I.e., Muhammad.

wb'qy mrdwm'n bznhr' 'wy šwwnd wṭ't 'wy brnd t' zndh by m'nd	The rest of the people will be under his protection and will obey him all the days of his life.
whr š'y bṭ't 'wy nh šwwnd bkwšt 'yyd	And anyone who disobeys him will be killed.
wyšr'l'n sk'ty wdwšw'ry rsd wmylh wšbt b'tl kwnd	Trouble and difficulties will come upon the Israelites. He will forbid <i>circumcision</i> and the <i>Sabbath</i> ,
wnh hiled twrh k'nd wšlwt'	and he will not allow the reading of the <i>Torah</i> or the recitation of <i>prayer</i> . ¹³⁰
[88v] krđan wqtl kwnd yšr'l'n bsy'r	He put many Israelites to death;
ps k'wnk 'n yšr'l ky dr 'n wqt yšr'ly nygh d'rd	fortunate is the Israelite who will hold on to his Israelite ways at that time,
wbṭ't 'yš'n nh rwwnd	and they who disobey these [decrees]. ¹³¹
wps 'yn sk'ty ky byšr'l'n bwwd hmh yšr'l'n g'm' 'yynd wbtšwbh grđnd	After this trouble that will befall the Israelites, all the Israelites will gather and <i>repent</i> .
w'n zm'n HQBH bwk'tyg'ry r' bp'rstd 'yš'n r'	And at that time <i>the Holy One, blessed be He</i> , will send them His redemption.
w'yn k sky 'yn hmh 'lm bst'nd p'dš'h[*y] kwnd Ṭ s'l wby myrd	And he who will have conquered the whole world, he will rule for 9 months, and he will die.
wyky dygr 'z zmyn mg'rb br k'yzd btrtr wdwšmntr 'z'n pyšyn	38. Then another will arise from the land of the West, more terrible and more fiendish than [those] who preceded him, ¹³²

¹³⁰ Aramaic.

¹³¹ Gil, Zerubbabel, 29, states: “in 944 (AH 332), Emperor Romanus I decreed an edict of forced conversion to Christianity against the Jews of the empire, yet the Apocalypse does not even allude to this.” In fact, this section of QD contains explicit references to Byzantine decrees against the Jewish religion in the mid-tenth century.

¹³² This is a newer update, a Maghrebi proto-Antichrist/ False Messiah.

w'lm'tš 'n bwd ky qdaš Q' gz Y' hryšn bwwd wpmh'yš Y' hryšn wdh'nš " hryšn wmwyš bwwd dr rwy bsy'r	and this is his sign: His height is 100 cubits and 11 spans, and his width 10 spans, and his mouth—one span, and he will have much hair on his face.
whmh zmyñ m'rb bst'nd	And he will conquer all the land of the West.
wmrđwm'n bd wk'rz'r kwn b'snd	And there will be wicked people and warmongers,
w'z hmh "lm grđ 'ynd wbyyš 'wy šwwnd	and they will gather from throughout the world and go to him
wš'wnyn gwynd ky 'wy mšyḥ hst	To say that he is the <i>messiah</i> . ¹³³
w'w'zh 'n mrdwm'n bhmh "lm šwwd whmh	And the voice of these people shall go forth throughout the world. ¹³⁴ And the whole
"lm [89r] bzyr dst 'wy bwwd	world will be under his hand.
whr ks ky bṭ't 'wy nh rwwd by kwšd wyšr'l'n r' šrh wšwqh bsy'r bwwd	He will kill everyone who disobeys him, and the Israelites will be in <i>trouble and distress</i> . ¹³⁵
wby gwryznd 'z dst 'yš'n wsk'ty bwwd bhmh g'yh'n	And they will flee from their hands and there will be trouble throughout the world.
wmy'n kwhh' šwwnd wsr š'n pyyd' šwwd	And they will go to the mountains, and there their leader will be revealed,
wlškr gwg wmgwg hmr'h 'wy b'snd	and the army of Gog and Magog will accompany him.
nyš'n 'yš'n 'n bwwd ky hmh D' š'šm b'sd dw 'z pyš wdw 'z ps	And this will be their sign: each of them has 4 eyes, two in front and two behind. ¹³⁶

¹³³ Hebrew.

¹³⁴ Here ends the section translated by Darmesteter.

¹³⁵ Hebrew.

¹³⁶ This is a depiction of Armilius, the anti-Messiah.

mrđwm'n r' sk'ty wdwšw'ry bwwd
wyšr'l'n byštr

Troubles and difficulties will come upon
people, and upon the Israelites even
more so.

ps mn dny'l gwp'tm 'y ywy 'yn hmh sk'ty
wdwšw'ry byšr'l'n 'yyd

39. So I, Daniel, said: "Oh God! Will all
these troubles and difficulties come
upon the Israelites?!"

grystm wl'wh krdm 'z bhr yšr'l'n
wgwp'tm

And I wept and cried out over the lot of
the Israelites and said:

k'wnwk ky nh z'yd wnh bynd 'yn sk'ty

"Blessed is he who will not be born to
see this trouble!"

ps ywy YT' ŠM' ml'k bmn p'rst'd wgwp't
ky

40. Then *God, blessed be His name*, sent
me an *angel*, and he said:

k'wnwk 'n yšr'l ky 'wmyd bk'wd'y d'rnd
wbdyn yšr'ly w't' t ywy

"Blessed is [the man from] Israel, [those
who] will trust in God and *the Israelite
religion* and obedience to God;

dr q'br rwwnd

they [even] go to the grave,

w'ndr 'n zm'n p'rm'n 'n rš' nh brnd
wk'yštn

and at that time will not submit to the
commandments of that *wicked-one*, and
themselves

[89v] r' nygh d'rnd bdyn yšr'ly

uphold the *Israelite religion*!"

ps by 'yynd mrđwm'ny dygr wy'ry 'yš'n
kwnnd

41. Then some other people will come
and help them,

'yynh' 'yš'n g'wdg'wntr bwwd 'z hmh
g'yh'n

and their habits will be most different
from [the habits of] the whole world.

bnzd zn yk dygr šwwnd wps 'wy kwnnd
škr'h k'wyštn kwnnd

They will go to one another's wife, and
after they have done [so], they will make
[the matter] known themselves.

wmrđwm'n by kwšnd

They will kill people,

wbđmšq rwwnd bnzd 'n rš' ky gwyd mn
hstm

and they will go to Damascus, to that
wicked-one, who will say: "I am he."

'yš'n br 'wy bgrwwnd

[And] they will believe in him.

wm'hy 'z dry'h by k'nd wbk'wwrd yšr'l'n dhd	And he will call a fish from the sea and give it to the Israelites as food.
wsk'ty wdwšw'ry bsy'r bwwd	And trouble and difficulties will multi- ply.
whr š'y 'z twk'm nyk'n bwwd nh šwwnd bṭ'ṭ 'yš'n	And every man who is from the seed of the righteous will not submit to obeying him,
w'n qwwl ky ywy b'yš'n krdhst bk'r d'rd	and the saying that God said to them will be fulfilled.
ps bdyd 'yyd mrdy 'z g'y dwr wbt'[*z]nd yšr'l hr yky 'z g'y whmh r' grd 'wwrnd	42. Then a man will appear from a distant place, and all Israel, each one, will rush from [his?] place, and they will gather together.
w'n mrd r' 'z p'rznd'n 'p'rym bwwd	And that man shall be from the children of Ephraim.
wby rwwnd bpyš 'n rš' ky my gwyd mn mšyḥ hm mlyk šwm' bwk'tyg'ry šwm'	They will go to that <i>wicked-one</i> who will say: "I am the <i>Messiah</i> , your king and your redeemer," ¹³⁷

137 SyrD 22 (Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 90–93): "When these signs are about to occur, then the advent of the senseless, the crooked serpent, Antichrist, will be about to appear. He will come from the ends of the land of the east to seduce the inhabitants of the world. He will say about himself, "I am Christ!" He will come out of a serpent's belly, from the intestines of an adder. With him will come many guards and mighty Angels. And these are his signs and the awe-inspiring vision of his stature: his head is huge, his hair red, his eyes blue and his neck strong. His sides are high, his chest broad, his arms long, and his fingers short. He has two horns next to his ears, and he has strong flesh in his ear as well as lean flesh. His figure is wrathful, stupendous, and furious, the figure of his stature is likewise stupendous. He will appear like lightning in the sky and like a lamp in the camp. With him [will be] fiery chariots and war camps. Faster than a leopard are his horses, and bolder than the evening wolves his couriers. His stature is great and high and floats over the mountains, equal to the clouds in the sky. With him [will come] a host of serpents and camps of Indians. Then the Gates of the North will be opened before him, and the army of Mebagbel will come out, and the multitude of the Agogites and Magogites, enormous in their stature, and mighty in their strength, and numerous in their hosts. They will take control of the world, the expanse of the earth, to march from sea to sea and from one end of the sky to the other."

wyšr'l'n gwyynd

G' [90r] nyš'n k'w'hym 'z tw t' 'ym'
b'wwr m'n kwnd

gwyd š 'y nyš'n my t'lbyd t' mn by bynm
š'wnyn nyš'n

k'w'hym ky 'n š'wb ky mšh R'H b'z m'r
krd dr pyš pr'h

tw by kwn

wyky dygr 'n ky dstw'r 'hrn 'H ky š'wb
kwšk bwd

hm dr 'n wqt brg wb'd'm tr br 'wwrd

wdygr nyš'n 'n k'w'hym ky k'wmbhr
mān ky 'hrn 'H gnwz krdhst 'šk'rh kwny

'yn hr sh nyš'n by kwny by d'nym ky r'st
my gwy

ps 'n rš' hrš' yk nh tww'nd krdn

and the Israelites will say:

“We ask for 3 signs from you so that
they should convince us.”

He will say to them: “ask ye so that I can
understand which signs?”

“We want that staff that *Moses our
Teacher, peace be upon him*, made into
a snake¹³⁸ again and again before Pha-
raoh;

you shall do [this too]!

And another one is that of the staff¹³⁹ of
Aaron, *peace be upon him*, which was
dry wood.

This time, too, let [it] produce leaves and
moist almonds!

And another sign that we want: reveal
[us] the Jar of *Manna* that Aaron, *peace
be upon him, made hidden*.¹⁴⁰

If you do all three of these signs, we will
know that you have spoken the truth.”

Then that *wicked-one* will not be able to
make even one [sign].

Gil, Zerubbabel, 15 and 34, writes: “In the Apocalypse, the followers of Gog and Magog are the people who have special garments and [light?] bows, who are the people of the symbols of he sun, with a hairdo in the middle of their heads, and they were known to be of the species of Gog and Magog, and they are disaster; they will conquer cities in the mountain (or: in Media) [...] They will totally destroy the North. [...] The reference seems to be to Turkish tribes.” However, *al-zubīnāt* are not “[light?] bows”, but “lances” or “spears”; *al-šamsāt* are not “symbols of the sun” but a Khazar sacred object mentioned by al-Kufi, something like a golden umbrella or mirror.

¹³⁸ Zotenberg read *m'y*, but the manuscript has the correct *m'r*.

¹³⁹ Two different Persian words are used for the staffs of Moses and Aaron.

¹⁴⁰ Hebrew, from Old Persian.

ps 'z 'n g'm' yšr'l'n wmhtr'n grd šwwnd
wbby'b'n 'prym rwwnd

wpl's pwsnd wbk'kstr nšynnd wk'wd'y
r' k'nnd ky

'y ywy 'ym' r' 'zyn šrh wšwqh p'rg' 'wwr
wbgwn'h 'ym' nt'r mh kwn w'ym' r' by
'mwrz

[90v] ps ywy ml'k' p'rst'd wgywd ky

šwm' mh trsyd ky šwm'r' bdst 'yn rš' nh
sp'rm

wlyykn b'yd ky šwm' ky yšr'l'n hstyd by
rwwyd wš'wnyn gwyd 'wyr' ky

'gr mšyḥ hsty b'yd ky mwrđh zndh
kwny t' 'ym' b'wwr kwnym

ps nh twwnd krđn

ps k'šm gyrd

wqtl wkwsšt p'rm'yd

wyšr'l'n by gwryznd zn'n wmrđwm'n
wtp'l'n

hbby'b'n g'm' šwwnd

wšywn kwnnd

wbk'kstr nšynnd

wk'wd'y r' k'nnd wbwg'r'n 't'ym kwnnd
M' rwz

43. After that, the congregation of Israel
and its leaders will gather and go to the
wilderness of Ephraim,

and they [will] put on sackcloth and sit
in the dust and call out to God:

“O God, please deliver us from *this*
trouble and distress; do not look at our
sins, and have mercy on us!”

44. Then God will send an *angel* and say
thus:

“Do not be afraid, for I will not deliver
you into the hands of that *wicked-one*;

but as you are Israelites, you must go
and say thus to him:

‘If you are the *messiah*, you must raise
the dead so that we may believe [in
you]!’”

This he will not be able to do,

and he will then become furious

and command to kill and destroy,¹⁴¹

and the Israelites will flee—women,
men, and children—

and they will gather in the wilderness

and mourn [for those killed]

and sit in the dust

and cry out¹⁴² a great cry to the Lord for
40 days.

141 Esther 3:13.

142 A semantic calque from Hebrew / Jewish Aramaic.

b'd 'z'n 'n'yt k'wd'y b'z yšr'l'n krd'yd w'z
'sm'n š'šmh' 'b by gwšyd

yk m'h š'wn hp'thy bwwd wyk hp'th
š'wn yk rwz wyk rwz š'wn yk s'ty
bwwd

YWY YT' ŠM' y'ry yšr'l'n
kwnd

[91r] kwnd w'n šrt ky 'b'z pdr'n krdhst
bg'y 'wwrd

wps 'yn t'ryky rwšn'yy p'rstd wyšr'l'n
k'wrmy wš'dy bwwd nš'lh

ps myk'l wgbry'l dr ḥt'rt HQBH by
'ystnd wḥ'g't k'w'hnd wgwyynd ky

kyy by hyly yšr'l'n dr glwt

w'gr pdr'n 'yš'n k't' krdnd g'yz' k'wys
stdnd

b'yd ky p'rg' wpyrqn' wyšw'h 'wwry
'yš'n r'

w'n šrt ky 'b'z 'brhm yšḥq wy'qb 'H
krdhy t'bt kwny

45. Then God will restore His providence
over the Israelites and open springs of
water from the heavens.

One month will be like a week, and one
week will be like one day, and one day
like an hour.

God, blessed be His Name, will help the
Israelites

and fulfill the covenant He made with
the Fathers.

And [in place of] darkness He will send
light, and the Israelites will have cheer
and joy, if Allah wills [=insha'Allah].

46. Then Michael¹⁴³ and Gabriel will
stand before the presence of the *Holy
One, blessed be He*, and ask [Him] for a
proof, saying thus:

“When will You let the Israelites rest
from the *exile*?

If their fathers sinned, then they
received their punishment.

You must bring them It is necessary that
Thou shouldst bring them rescue,¹⁴⁴
release,¹⁴⁵ and *salvation*,

and the covenant that You made with
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, *peace be
upon them*—fulfill [it],

¹⁴³ Compare Dan 12:1: “At that time, the great prince, Michael, who stands beside the sons of your people, will appear. It will be a time of trouble, the like of which has never been since the nation came into being. At that time, your people will be rescued, all who are found inscribed in the book.”

¹⁴⁴ Arabic.

¹⁴⁵ Aramaic, strangely vocalized.

wbzkwt mšh R'H ky QK s'l pyš tw bwd
dr sr yšr'l'n

And [also] *in the merit of Moses our Teacher; peace be upon him*, who was at the head of the Israelites before You for 120 years.”

ps ywy bmyk'l wgbry'l gwyd ky

47. Then *God* will say to Michael and Gabriel thus:

šwm' by rwwyd wyšr'l'n byš'rt dhyd ky

“Go and give the Israelites [these] good tidings:

k'wnwk hyd šwm' ky rh' nh krđyd šry't
ẖq wp'rm'nh' k'wd'y wbnzh'r 'yn rš' nh
šwdyd

‘Fortunate are you who you did not abandon the Law of God and His commandments and did not follow that *wicked man!*’

w'n'n ky bznh'r

And to those who followed

[91v] 'n rš' šwdnd by gwyd

that *wicked man*, say to them:

w'y bšwm' ky plyd šwdyd

‘Woe to you because you have defiled yourself!

'n wqt k'wd'y y'd kwnd yšr'l'n r' wšwm'
r' ky hl'k k'wwd krđyd wdyn yšr'ly rh'
krđyd

48. At that time, God will remember the Israelites, and [also] you who have lost yourselves [forever] and abandoned *the Israelite religion.*”

w'n hng'm ky myk'l wgbry'l by rwwnd
blškrgh yšr'l'n wyšr'l'n bynnd ky 'br
rwy zmy'n wp'tydh bšrh wšwqh hmy
grynd pyš ywy

When Michael and Gabriel will come to the camp of the Israelites, they will see the Israelites falling on the ground and crying before God *in trouble and distress.*

myk'l wgbry'l š'wnyn gwynd 'yš'n r' ky

Michael and Gabriel will thus say to them:

br k'yzyd wsr 'z zmy'n br d'ryd wšbh
gwyd k'wd'y r' ky ywy šwm' r' by rh'nyd
wp'rg' rš'nyd 'z dst 'yn rš' w'z t'ryky
brwšn'yy w'z rwšn'yy bp'dš'hy

“Arise and raise your heads up from the earth and say *praise* to God, for God will redeem you and send you salvation and deliverance from the hands of this *wicked one*, and from darkness to light, and from light to kingdom.”

wyšr'l'n š'wn 'yn bšnw wnd wnḥmw t by
pdyrnd p'lḥ'l šwkr wšbh gwynd dr pyš
škynh

ps 'n ks ky gwp'th bwd ky mšyḥ hm

'wš [92r] by kwšnd

wywy YT ŠM' 'z 'sm'n 'šk'rh šwwd w'z
šywn wby t hm qdš b'ngy 't'ym w'w'zy
bwzwr g pyyd' šwwd

wywy 'z hmḥ g'm't yšr'l r'š'y b'šd

wyrwšlm prdh 'z 'sm'n p'rw hyl d

wpyyd' bwwd š'k' wryšh yšy

y'ny mšyḥ bn dwd 'H

š'wn ky mqr' my p'rm'yd

wbrwḥ šptyw ymyt rš'

y'ny bb'd lby'n 'wy by myrd 't'lm

wmšyḥ bn ywsf kwšth šwwd

And the Israelites, when they hear
it, will *be comforted*, and they will
indeed¹⁴⁶ say thanksgiving and *praise*
before the *Shekhinah*.

49. After that, that man who said: “I am
the *Messiah*”—

they will kill him.

And *God, blessed be His name*, will be
revealed from heaven. And He will
shout with a loud voice a mighty roar
from Zion and from the Temple.¹⁴⁷

and God will be pleased with all the
congregation of Israel,

and He will bring down from heaven
the Jerusalem [that lies behind] the veil
[=*pargod*].

and the offspring and root of Jesse will
be revealed,¹⁴⁸

that is, the Messiah son of David, peace
be upon him,

as the *Biblical* verse states:

“and with the breath of his lips shall he
slay the wicked” (Isa 11:4).

That is, with the wind of his lips the
oppressor will die.

And *Messiah son of Joseph* will be killed

¹⁴⁶ *ft-’l-ḥāl.

¹⁴⁷ Compare: SyrD 24 (Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 94): “He will pitch his tent opposite Zion, and his tent will settle opposite Jerusalem.”

¹⁴⁸ Isa 11:10: “In that day, The stock of Jesse that has remained standing shall become a standard to peoples—Nations shall seek his counsel, and his abode shall be honored.”

wṭ"hr šwwd ḥm mšyḥ bn dwd ḥ	and the sign of <i>Messiah son of David</i> , <i>peace be upon him</i> , will appear;
wby kwšd [*h]mh lškr gwg wmgwg	and he will kill the entire army of Gog and Magog;
wby 'yyd 'lyhw Z"L bbyš'rt yšr'l zndyg'n wmwrdyg'n wbyṭ ḥmqdš 'bd'n r' kwnd	and Elijah, <i>of blessed memory</i> , will come with good tidings for Israel. He will raise up the living and the dead, and he will rebuild <i>the Temple</i> .
wmšr wyr'n bwwd	Egypt will be destroyed,
wbyṭ ḥmqdš b'qy m'nd	yet <i>the Temple</i> will remain [firm in its place].
wmšyḥ bn dwd w'lyhw wzrbbl ḥ br sr hr hztym ¹⁴⁹	50a. And <i>Messiah son of David</i> , Elijah, and Zerubbabel, <i>peace be upon them</i> —to the top of <i>the Mount of Olives</i>
[92v] rwwnd wmšyḥ r' 'lyhw p'rm' t' bwq znnd	they will go. Elijah will command the <i>Messiah</i> to blow the shofar.
w'z'n rwšn'yy ky dr ššt ymy br'syt bwd b'z dyd'r 'yyd *wm'ht'b š'wn k'wršyd bwwd	And [some?] of the light from <i>the six days of creation</i> will become visible, and the light of the moon will be like [the light of] the sun,
wywy 'swt' šlymh p'rstd bhmh rng'wr'n yšr'l	and God will send complete recovery to all the oppressed of Israel.
wdwdwm ky by znd 'lyhw Z"L mwrdyg'n r' b'z zyḥ'nd w'z k"b k'y'znd whmh yk dygr r' by šn'snd zn wšwhr pdr wpwsr br'dr b' br'dr	50. When he blows the shofar a second time, Elijah, <i>of blessed memory</i> , will resurrect the dead, and they will rise from the dust. Friends will recognize each other, a wife and her husband, a father and [his] son, a brother and [his] brother;

149 *Sic!*. Pronounced *zētīm.

hṁh pyš mšyḥ 'yynd 'z š'h'r kn'rh 'lm
'z mšrq wmg'rb wšm'l wg'nwb 'br b'l
symwrg'

ḥ'ṭ'r 'yynd yšr'l'n r' bpyš mšyḥ

stwny 'tšyn 'z byt hmqdš bdyd'r 'yyd
bnyš'n

t' hr ksy r' ky 'yn bynd by d'nd ky byt
hmqdš 'n s't bdyd 'mdh

t' 'ym'n 'wwrd

bwq shwm ky by znd šk'ynh pyyd' grdd

wbwq [93r] š'h'rwṁ ky by znd kwhh'
h'mwn b'snd w'lm r' r'st by 'ystd

kwh tbwr wkrml wḥrmwn whr hzytym
w'z kwh t' kwh Ḥ' p'rsng bwwd wbyṭ
hmqdš bdyd 'yyd

š'wn'n ky yḥzq'l 'H gwp't

all will come before the *Messiah* from
the four corners of the earth,¹⁵⁰ from the
east and the west, from the north and
south,¹⁵¹ on the wings of eagles.¹⁵²

the Israelites will come presenting
(themselves) before the *Messiah*.

A pillar of fire from *the Temple* will
come into sight / be revealed as a sign

so that everyone who will see it, will
know that *the Temple* had appeared at
that Hour

so that one would believe.

51. And when he blows the third shofar
blast, the *Shekhinah* will be revealed

and when he blows the fourth shofar
blast, the mountains will be flattened,
and the *world* will be straightened;

and Mount Tabor and Carmel and
Hermon and *the Mount of Olives* will be
from one mountain to another as far
as eight parasangs, and *the Temple* will
come into view,

as Ezekiel,¹⁵³ *peace be upon him*, said.

150 Arabic, not Hebrew.

151 Arabic, not Hebrew.

152 Simurğ.

153 Ezek 38:19–20: “For I have decreed in My indignation and in My blazing wrath: On that day, a terrible earthquake shall befall the land of Israel. The fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that move on the ground, and every human being on earth shall quake before Me. Mountains shall be overthrown, cliffs shall topple, and every wall shall crumble to the ground.”

w'n dr zryn ky dr zmyn p'rwd šwdh
bwd dw ml'k by 'yynd wbp'rm'n ywy 'z
zmyn br 'wwrnd wbr 'wyznd š'wn'n ky
qdym bwdh

And the Golden Gate that had sunk into
the earth, two *angels* will come at the
commandment of God, and they will
take it out of the earth and hang it up as
it was before.

w'brhm 'bynw 'H 'z r'st by 'ystd wms̄h
R'H wms̄yh bn dwd 'H 'z š'f yšr'l'n 'ng'y
'ystnd

52. And Abraham *our father, peace be
upon him*, will stand on the right, and
Moses *our Teacher, peace be upon him*,
and Messiah son of David, *peace be upon
him*, will be on the left, and the Israelites
will stand there.

wps mšyh b'brhm by gwyd ky 'yš'n
p'rznd'n tw hnd whmš'wn'n mšh R'H
gwyd ky

Then *Messiah* will say to Abraham:
“These are your sons,” and so Moses *our
Teacher, peace be upon him*, will say:

'yn'n yšr'l dwst tw hnd

“These are Israel, your companions.”

ps 'brhm yšr'l'n by bynd wbmšyh gwyd
ky

Then Abraham will see the Israelites
and say to the *Messiah*:

'yn'n p'rznd'n mn hnd š'wn qwl pswq

“These are my sons,” as the *text of the
verse* says:

[93v] zr' 'brhm 'hby

“The seed of Abraham, My beloved”
(Isa 41:8).

wyšr'l'n š'dy kwnnd wmdh ywy gwynd
wšwkr gwynd ky r'stygr hst k'wd'y ky
*hr š'y 'wy pdyrwp't 'b'z 'ym' krd

And the Israelites will rejoice, and
they will praise God and thank (Him),
because the Lord is righteous, because
everything He promised, He has
[indeed] done with us.¹⁵⁴

hz'r wš s'l d'wwt mšyh k'wwrnd

53. For one thousand and 300 years they
will eat the *Messiah's banquet*,¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ The end shows syntactic calques from Hebrew/Aramaic (עשה עמו).

¹⁵⁵ SyrD 40 (Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 117): “Then the Mighty Lord will gather all the elect of Israel, all the scattered of Judah and the entire offspring of Abraham, and will celebrate a banquet for Zion and a feast for Jerusalem. ...”

wbyt hmqdš 'b'd'n bwwd ky hmh k'lq
k'br yšr'l'n šnwwnd

dah bədah wbyst wbyst by 'ynd pyš
yšr'l'n wgyynd ky

'ym' š'y g'wrmy wgw'n'h krdhym ky
'ym'r' dr d'wwt nh k'ndyd

w'yn'n ky by 'ynd šdyq'n 'wmwt h'wlm
'yš'n b'šnd

whr g'y ky yky 'z yšr'l'n bynnd 'z pyš b'z
šwwnd wsg'dh brnd wdr pwštš gyrnd
wbpyš mlk hmšyḥ brnd btwp'ḥh

t' hmh yšr'l'n g'm' 'yynd pyš mšyḥ dr byt
hmqdš

w'nh' ky 'z dyn yšr'l

gwšthnd [94r] k'g'yl šwwnd wšrms'r t'
hr ky 'yš'n bynd bšn'sd w'ngwšt nwm'y
k'lq my b'šnd š'wn'n ky pswq my gwyd

wyš'w wr'w bpgry h'nšym hpš'ym by ky
twl'tm l' tnmw w'šm l' tkbh whyw dr'wn
lkl bšr

ps 'yš'n ky 'wl glwt kšydhnd wdyn yšr'ly
wšrt yšr'ly bg'y 'b'wrdnd

š'd wk'wrm b'šnd

and *the Temple* will be built, because all
the peoples will hear the good news of
the Israelites.

They will come in groups of ten and
twenty before the Israelites and speak to
them, saying:

“What crime have we committed and
what have we sinned that you did not
call us to the banquet?”

And those who will come will be *righteous*
people of *the nations of the world*
[only].

And wherever they see one of the
Israelites, they will bend down and bow
before him and take him on their backs
and bring him before *the King Messiah*
as a gift,

so that all the Israelites will be gathered
before the *Messiah in the Temple*.

And those who, from the *religion of*
Israel,

have deviated shall be ashamed and
shameful, so that all who see them shall
know and point their finger at them, as
the *verse* says,

“They shall go out and gaze on the
corpses of the men who rebelled against
Me: Their worms shall not die, nor their
fire be quenched; they shall be a horror
to all flesh” (Isa 66:24)

54. Then those who carried the *yoke of*
exile and kept the *Israelite religion* and
the *Israelite covenant*,

shall rejoice and make merry,

w'n gwn'h k'r'n 'z pyš k'wwd r'ndh
kwnnd wgynd ky

and they shall expel those sinners from
their own midst and say thus:

by rwwyd 'ym' 'z šwm' byz'r hstym

“Go, we are disgusted by you,”

w'yš'n rwy sy'h wk'w'r wk'lq by b'snd

and their faces will be blackened, and
they will be despised and weary.¹⁵⁶

b'd by rwwnd b'mq yhwšp't t' rwz ywm
hdynd hgdwl

And after that they will go to the
Jehoshaphat Valley until the *Great Judgment Day*.

wyšr't'n hz'r wsy šd s'l dr ymwt hmšyḥ
swr wd'wt wdwwlt wbwzwrww'ry
wšr'p't b'š¹⁵⁷ t' ywm hdynd hgdwl

And the Israelites will have a feast and
a banquet, and wealth and greatness
and honor for a thousand and three
hundred years during *the messianic era*,
until the *Great Judgment Day*.

ps 'n rwz t'ryk

Then there will be that day, dark

[94v] wšmgyn by b'šd š'wn rwšn'yy [š']
r'g' rwšn'yy dhđ

and terrible, when [only] the light of the
candle will give [some] light.

ps HQBH dyd'r kwnd gn 'dn wgyhnm
ky pyš 'z 'wlm 'p'ryd

Then *the Holy One, blessed be He*, will
reveal the *Garden of Eden* and *Gehenna*,
which He had created before [the cre-
ation of] the *world*

gn 'dn Z' dr bwwd wghnm G' dr bwwd

The *Garden of Eden* will have 7 gates,
and *Gehenna* will have 3 gates

wrwz d'wwry hmh k'lq'n pyš škynh by
'ystnd

and on the Day of Judgment,¹⁵⁸ all the
peoples shall stand before the *Shekhinah*,

whr ksy ky gwn'h[*y] krdh b'šd dr pyš
'yyd hr yšr'ly ky byšr'ly 'ystdh 'yyd

and every man who has sinned will pass
before every Israelite who stood fast in
his Israelite ways; he shall come [to]

¹⁵⁶ *xalaq*.

¹⁵⁷ According to Zotenberg (424 n.1), this is written in abbreviated form.

¹⁵⁸ Persian.

G' dr gyhnm yky 'brhm bryš 'ystd
wyky yšhq wyky y'qb 'H wḥ'g't k'w'hnd
wgwynd

'y ywy 'hd wšrty ky k'wwd krdhy y'd
kwn š'wn'n ky dr kl'm k"š y'd krdhst
š'wn ky gwp't

wzkrty 't bryty y'qwb w'f 't bryty yšhq
w'f 't bryty 'brhm

wHQBH l'wh 'yš'n bšnwdd wqbwł
kwnd wyšr'l'n r' 'z gwn'h 'p'w kwnd

b'brhm bk'šd

hr [95r] [*ky *z] twk'm p'k bwdd
whmh yšr'l'n bgn 'dn rwwnd

dygr gwn'hk'r'n 'yš'n r' gwynd

'y nby'n ky 'z 'ym' ky m'r' pswł krdyd

'yš'n hys' g'w'b š'n nh b'šd wyk sr 'yš'n r'
bghnm p'rstnd

wgyhnm r' hp't ṭbqh bwdd

ṭbqh zyryn g'y 'nh' hst ky k'lyf twrh
krdh b'šnd

wṭbqh dwdwm g'y pws'ywm bwdd

wṭbqh shwm 'n ks ky yqyn 'br yšr'ly nh
dwrwst b'šnd

The 3 gates of hell. On one Abraham will stand, and on one Isaac, and on the one Jacob, *peace be upon him*, and they will ask for proof and say:

“O God, remember the covenant and the promise that You Yourself made, and remember as mentioned in Your treasured words, as it says:

“Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham” (Lev 26:42).

And *the Holy One, blessed be He*, will hear their cry and accept [their request] and forgive the Israelites of [their] sins.

55. He [God] will give Abraham as a present

all those who are of pure seed, and all the Israelites will go to the *Garden of Eden*.

[Then] the sinners will say to them again:

“O prophets, who are of us, yet you *disqualify* us?”

No answer will be given by them to them, and they will send them to *Gehenna* at once.

And *Gehenna* has seven sections:

The lowest section is the place of those who altered the *Torah*;

the second section is the place of *criminals*;

the third section is that of men whose faith in [their] Israelite religion was lacking;

wṭbqh ṣ'h'rwm k'p'r'n ky ṭ't k'wd'y nh
krdh b'šnd

the fourth section—infidels,¹⁵⁹ who
would not obey God;

wṭbqh png'wm rš'y yšr'l 'nh' ky ky
rwsy b'rygy krdh b'šnd wbr 'št 'yš btr

the fifth section—they are *the wicked of Israel* who fornicated, and [those who transgressed with] a married woman, [their situation] is worse;

wṭbqh ššwm 'wmwt h'wlm 'nh' ky d'wy
zwhd wz'hdy wzr'qy krdh b'šnd

And the sixth section—they are *the nations of the world* who are devotees of hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and pretense;

[95v] wṭbqh hp'twm ksy ky dr my'n
yšr'l'n da'nwt wg'wt krdh b'šnd w'ml 'wy
bd bwdhst

and the seventh section—people among the Israelites who engaged in *greed and pride*,¹⁶⁰ and whose deeds were bad.

wb'qy yšr'l'n hmh 'wlm hb' bhr gyrnd

And all the rest of the Israelites will all take [a] share [in] the *World to Come*.

wnyz rš'y yšr'l hmh 'wqwbt gyhnm by
y'bnd wb'd kl'š šwwnd 'z 'wqwbt

56. And also the *wicked of Israel* shall obtain the punishment of *Gehenna*, and [only] after that will they be saved from punishment;

w'š'n r' nyz bhr gyrnd 'b'z br'dr'n zyr' ky
nsl 'brhm yšhq wy'qb 'H pn'h nh šwwnd

and even they will receive a share with their brothers, because they are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, *peace be upon them*, and they will not be destroyed;¹⁶¹

'ēl bām

God is in their midst.¹⁶²

y'ny šk'ynh k'wd'y dr my'n 'yš'n hst

This means that God's *Shekhinah* is found in their midst¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Persianized Arabic.

¹⁶⁰ Two Hebrew words unattested.

¹⁶¹ Read with Zotenberg, *Geschichte Daniels*, 426 n. 1, *fenā*.

¹⁶² A quasi-reference to Zeph 3:17? See also *bShabbat* 104a, and Meir Bar-Ilan, *Scribes and Books in the Second Temple Period and in the Period of Mishnah and Talmud*, (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2023), 11 [Hebrew]. I am grateful to Professor Bar-Ilan.

¹⁶³ A *midrashic* gloss of the last preceding words.

š'y m'ny 'n sbb r'

What is the meaning of this reason?¹⁶⁴

y'ny ky NGRSG'L ky 'wy srng ghnm hst
pyš k'wd'y 'ystd wgydyd

This means that Nergasgal,¹⁶⁵ who is the ruler of *Gehenna*, [will] stand before God and say:

'yy rbwn h'wlmym

“O Sovereign of the worlds,

bhmlh 'wmh wlšwn mwsłt krdhy mr' ky
? b'tš ky swz'nm 'yš'n r'

You gave me power over every *nation and language* so that I may burn them with fire!

w'yn yk 'wmh ky yš'r'l hnd š'y sbb hst ky
mr' b'yš'n mwsłt nmy kwny

And this one nation, which is Israel, why did You give me no power over them?”¹⁶⁶

[96r] t' HQBH 'wyr' g'w'b dhd ky

57. Until the *Holy One*, *blessed be He*, answers him, saying:

g'wmlh 'wmh wlšwn dr ḥwkm tw
krdhm 'l yš'r'l ky ḥwkm tw br 'yš'n nyst

“All nations and languages I gave into your power except Israel, for your power is not over them.”

ps g'w'b gwyd ghnm ky bš'y sbb

Then *Gehenna* will respond: “Why?”

gwyd ky bsbb 'n ky 'yš'n btwrh k'ndn
mšg'wl šwdhnd wmn 'yš'n r' 'zyz my
d'rm 'br 'l 'bdyn

Says God: “Because they are busy reading the *Torah*, and I love them more than all the worlds,”

ŠN mrḥwq ywy nr'h ly w'hbt 'wlm
'hbtyk 'l kn mškyk ḥsd

As it says: “The Lord revealed Himself to me of old. Eternal love I conceived for you then; therefore I continue My grace to you” (Jer 31:3).

¹⁶⁴ A Judeo-Persian rhetorical formula.

¹⁶⁵ The Angel of Gehenna according to *Alpha Betha de-Rabbi Aqibah*. In the third century CE, Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of the Netherworld, was still known among Aramaic-speaking pagans, and his title was *dḥšpt'*, “executioner.” See J.C. Greenfield, “Nergol *dḥšpt'*,” *Acta Iranica* 28 (1988): 135–144.

¹⁶⁶ From here to the end of the work was added in a different, younger hand; see also Zotenberg, *Geschichte Daniels*, 426 n. 3.

wnyz šk'yinh dr my'n 'ym' mskn gyrd ¹⁶⁷	And He shall place His <i>Shekhinah</i> to dwell amongst us again,
ŠN wšw ly mqdš wšknty btwkm	as it says: "And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8).
hmqwm brwk hw' brhmyw hrbyw wbhšdyw hgdwlym wbtwbw hn'mnym	<i>The Omnipresent, blessed be He, by His many faithful mercies and His great graces and His goodness,</i>
g'm' b'z kwn'd pr'gndyg'n yšr'l 'z š'h'r kyn'rh 'wlm	will once again gather the outcasts of Israel from the four corners of the world ¹⁶⁸
bzmn qryb w'mrw 'mn wyqyyw lynw mqr' šktwb bwnh yrwšlm ywy	soon; and say ye: Amen. And may it be fulfilled through us the scripture that reads: "The Lord builds ¹⁶⁹ up Jerusalem;
ndhy yšr'l ykns	He gathers together the outcasts of Israel" (Ps 147:2).
brwk' ywy l'wlm 'mn w'mn tmt hzq	<i>Blessed is God forever Amen and Amen Finished; be strong.</i>

¹⁶⁷ The text in H. Paper, "The Vatican Judeo-Persian Pentateuch: Exodus-Leviticus," *Acta Orientalia* 29 (1966): 110, is *wby kwnnd dr pyš mqdš nšy'nm dr my'n 'yš'n*.

¹⁶⁸ Compare SyrD 39–40 (Henze, *Syriac Apocalypse*, 117–118): Yet the uncircumcised and unclean will not enter into her [= the New Jerusalem (this is possibly a reworking of a Jewish source)]. [...] Then the Mighty Lord will gather all the elect of Israel, all the scattered of Judah and the entire offspring of Abraham, and will celebrate a banquet for Zion and a feast for Jerusalem, also, the Paschal feast and joy and glory, a banquet of peace, in the days of Christ, at the salvation of Zion, also, at the assembling of the exiles of Israel and all of the just and righteous. We beg from Christ our Lord that he deem us worthy to stand at his right side and to mingle us among the companies of his saints, among the ranks of his friends, those who have loved him and kept his commandments, in his grace and his abundant mercy, for ever and ever. Amen. Here ends the wondrous revelation which was revealed to the prophet Daniel in the land of Elam and in Persia.

¹⁶⁹ Sic!

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